



Equilibrium

by Matt Fitton

THE DOCTOR: PETER DAVISON

Time and space traveller.

NYSSA: SARAH SUTTON

Time traveller's companion.

TEGAN: JANET FIELDING

Time traveller's companion.

TURLOUGH: MARK STRICKSON

Time traveller's companion.

QUEEN KARLINA:

(F, 40s) Apparently benevolent ruler of Isenfel.

BALANCER SKARSGARD/VIKTOR SKARSGARD:

(M, 50s) Loyal administrator./Pioneering E-Space scientist.

INGER:

(F, 20s) Practical, fierce princess.

JESPER:

(M, 40s) Hard-working servant, wants to change status quo.

ROMY:

(F, 40s) His wife, protector of Isenfel's children.

ALSO: HUNTSMEN; COURTIERS; VILLAGERS.

(NB pronunciation ISENFEL: 'EYE-sun-fell')

DIRECTOR: KEN BENTLEY

SCRIPT EDITOR: ALAN BARNES

PRODUCER: DAVID RICHARDSON

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS: NICHOLAS BRIGGS & JASON HAIGH-ELLERY

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PART ONE

SCENE 1: INT. TARDIS

CONTINUOUS FROM END OF 'MISTFALL': TARDIS LURCHING ABOUT, CONSOLE EXPLOSIONS, ALARMS, DOCTOR RUSHING ROUND CONSOLE.

NYSSA:

(ACROSS OTHERS) I can't get these systems to respond!

TURLOUGH:

(ACROSS OTHERS) Doctor, what are we supposed to do?

TEGAN:

(ACROSS OTHERS) Won't someone tell me what's happening?!

DOCTOR:

(WRESTLING CONTROLS) Would everyone please calm down, I'm trying to concentrate!

OTHERS SHUT UP. TARDIS MALFUNCTIONING AND ALARMS ONGOING.

DOCTOR:

Thank you! Nyssa, see what you can do about the hull phasing. The controls over there should do... something.

NYSSA:

Yes, Doctor. (USES CONTROLS, SOME ALARMS STOP)

TEGAN:

At last! – So we're alright to fly without this stabiliser Solus stole from the TARDIS?

DOCTOR:

Not really, no.

TEGAN:

What's that mean, 'not really'?

DOCTOR:

That's not important right now.

NYSSA:

The point is, without the interface stabiliser we'll never get out of E-Space.

DOCTOR:

Which is why I'm trying to pick up the ion trail from Solus's spaceship.

TEGAN:

But he could have gone anywhere!

NYSSA:

E-Space isn't that big. Not compared to N-Space.

DOCTOR:

We've lost a hairpin in a swimming pool, rather than an ocean.

TURLOUGH:

It's still a very large swimming [pool.]

RIPPLING ALERT SOUND.

DOCTOR:

Ah-ha!

TEGAN:

Is that it? You've found it?

DOCTOR:

More than that, I've picked up the end point of the ion trail.

TEGAN:

So his spaceship's landed?

TURLOUGH:

Or it's exploded.

DOCTOR:

(MANIPULATING CONTROLS) Strange, there seems to be some kind of barrier between us and its location...

NYSSA:

(USING CONTROLS) Doctor, I've re-routed some internal systems to compensate for the loss of dimensional shell integrity.

TEGAN:

You did what with the what?

DOCTOR:

Thank you, Nyssa. We can attempt a landing, at least. Hold on, everyone...

STUTTERING MATERIALISATION STARTS.

TEGAN:

'Attempt'? What do you mean, 'attempt'?

TURLOUGH:

He means – either we land, or we crash!

SCENE 2: **EXT. ICE PLAIN**

TARDIS STUTTERING MATERIALISATION COMPLETES. DOORS OPEN, CREW STUMBLE OUT ONTO SNOW-COVERED ICY TERRAIN, COUGHING.

DOCTOR:

Give it a few minutes for the smoke to clear.

TEGAN:

Are you kidding? That thing needs a complete overhaul.

NYSSA:

She's right, Doctor. It's too dangerous to go back inside without the stabiliser. The outer shell could become completely detached from the internal dimensions.

DOCTOR:

Yes... and without that seal, she's leaking energy into the vortex. We need to find that stabiliser while we've still enough power to leave E-Space.

TURLOUGH:

You could have picked a more hospitable place to land. Ice, more ice and oh, what's over there? Mountains made of ice.

TEGAN:

Whatever planet we're on, you found the North Pole. It's freezing!

DOCTOR:

I was rather more concerned with not getting vaporised by an energy induction barrier than checking the local weather forecast. Here, Nyssa. Take this.

HANDS NYSSA A TRACKER, ACTIVATES SCANNING AND BEEPING.

NYSSA:

(TAKING IT) The tracker from the console.

DOCTOR:

It's tuned to the stabiliser's energy signature. There aren't many things the TARDIS will recognise as its own in this universe, let alone on this planet.

NYSSA:

It's picking something up three kilometres in... this direction.

DOCTOR:

Good. We'll be there in no time at all.

NYSSA:

The TARDIS scanner showed life-signs that way too. A settlement of some kind.

DOCTOR:

Excellent. (SETTING OFF) A brisk walk will keep us warm.

TURLOUGH:

In the snow. Oh joy.

THEY START WALKING.

TEGAN:

Come on Turlough, where's your pioneering spirit?

TURLOUGH:

Back in my room. With a hot cup of cocoa.

NYSSA:

Look. In the distance. There's something big half-buried in the ice.

TEGAN:

Is it... wreckage? I can't tell through the snowstorm.

DOCTOR:

Whatever's falling on it isn't snow. It's black.

ICE CRACKS BEHIND. THEY TURN BACK TOWARDS TARDIS.

TEGAN:

Now what?

NYSSA:

Doctor! Look!

TURLOUGH:

The ice around the TARDIS... it's breaking up!

MORE CRACKING ICE.

DOCTOR:

Keep away from the cracks, all of you!

ALMIGHTY CRACK AS ICE SPLITS AND THE TARDIS SLIDES BENEATH.

TEGAN:

The TARDIS...!

TURLOUGH:

It's gone under!

SCENE 3: EXT. ICE PLAIN, FURTHER OFF

6 x HORSES (TWO PULLING CART) SLOWING ON FROZEN TUNDRA.

INGER:

(PULLING UP HER HORSE) Whoa...! – There is poor hunting here today, Jesper. The snowbeasts know we are coming. Either that, or black snow falls and they keep themselves hidden.

JESPER:

One moment... my lady.

JESPER DISMOUNTS, SCRAPES SNOW.

JESPER:

There are tracks. The beasts gathered here. But something drew them off, to the east.

INGER TURNS HORSE.

INGER:

There is no tracker like you in the kingdom, Jesper. (CALLING) Turnabout, hunters! Turn east!

JESPER:

Look east, your majesty. What do you see?

INGER:

The shadow clouds.

JESPER:

You were right. It is another day of darkness. The black snows fall again.

INGER:

Then let us take our prize before it is stolen. Come on!

ALL GALLOP OFF.

SCENE 4: **EXT. ICE PLAIN**

WALKING OVER ICE. A FEW CRACKS AND FALLING FRAGMENTS.

TURLOUGH:

What are we going to do?

DOCTOR:

One thing at a time. The TARDIS isn't far below the surface.

TEGAN:

Yeah, I can still see the lamp.

DOCTOR:

Stay away from the edge, Tegan.

NYSSA:

If there are people in that settlement, they might be willing to help haul it out.

DOCTOR:

Before we can do anything, we need that stabiliser. (DECIDES)
Come on.

THEY START WALKING AGAIN

TEGAN:

We're leaving the TARDIS behind?

TURLOUGH:

We don't have much choice.

DOCTOR:

Turlough's right. We can't leave until I can repair her anyway.
Our first priority is that missing component.

NYSSA'S TRACKER BEEPS.

NYSSA:

At least we know it's not too far away.

TURLOUGH:

You know what else isn't far away?

GROWLING, OFF.

TEGAN:

They're like wolves!

TURLOUGH:

Only twice the size.

NYSSA:

They're so white...

DOCTOR:

No wonder we didn't see them coming.

TURLOUGH:

This is all very well, but shouldn't we get a move on?

TURLOUGH QUICKENS HIS PACE.

DOCTOR:

(ABRUPTLY) Don't run! If they're anything like Earth wolves, they'll sense panic and attack.

SCANNER BEEPS. A SNARL IN RESPONSE.

DOCTOR:

Best switch that off for now, Nyssa.

NYSSA:

(SWITCHING SCANNER OFF) It's this way.

DOCTOR:

A brisk walk, remember.

THEY CARRY ON WALKING. SNOWBEAST SNARLS, OFF.

DOCTOR:

Maybe a little brisker than that.

THEY WALK OFF QUICKLY.

SNOWBEASTS SNAPPING AND GROWLING, START SLOWLY AFTER THEM.

SCENE 5: EXT. ICE PLAIN, FURTHER OFF

GALLOPING HORSES ON FROZEN TUNDRA SLOW.

INGER:

(PULLING UP HER HORSE) Hold. There. Do you see?

THE HUNTING PARTY STOPS.

JESPER:

(CALLING BACK) Snowbeasts. The pack is on the move together.

INGER:

It is unusual for so many to be out in the daytime.

JESPER:

(FROM AHEAD) Come here, my lady. Look beyond the end of the ice-mountain pass. See what has drawn their hunger?

INGER'S HORSE TROTS FURTHER TO JOIN JESPER.

INGER:

More strangers? Four of them. Such odd clothing.

JESPER:

Why have they come here? Do you think they know of the other?

INGER:

They are brave or foolish to taunt the snowbeasts this way. I see no weapons...

JESPER:

Then they cannot harm us.

INGER:

Nor can they protect themselves.

INGER SPURS HER HORSE.

INGER:

(CALLING) With me! We shall catch ourselves something extra today!

THEY GALLOP OFF.

SCENE 6: **EXT. ICE PLAIN**

SNARLING, SNAPPING SNOWBEASTS CLOSING. TARDIS CREW HURRYING THROUGH SNOW.

TEGAN:

(WALKING QUICKLY) Walking isn't working, Doctor. They're gaining on us!

DOCTOR:

(WALKING QUICKLY) You're right. Maybe we should... in fact... Run!

THEY SET OFF RUNNING. THE SNOWBEASTS GROWL AND GIVE CHASE.

TURLOUGH:

(RUNNING) Where are we going?

NYSSA:

(RUNNING) There's a fissure in the ice-wall ahead. It looks too narrow for those creatures, if we can squeeze inside..

DOCTOR:

(RUNNING) Good thinking, Nyssa. Come on!

SNOWBEASTS CLOSE IN. THEN: GALLOPING HORSES EMERGE FROM PASS, ARROWS SHOOTING IN FROM DISTANCE.

INGER:

(RIDING, CALLING) Yah! Fire!

DOCTOR:

Everybody! Get down!

THE TARDIS CREW DROP. ARROWS HIT SEVERAL SNOWBEASTS. THEY YELP AND FALL. OTHERS SNARL AND RUN OFF.

TEGAN:

What the-?

INGER AND HUNTERS GALLOP UP.

INGER:

Good shooting Jesper! We have brought down half the pack! You men. Finish them off. We shall not return to my mother's castle empty-handed after all.

HUNTERS DISMOUNT AND KILL SNOWBEASTS UNDER FOLLOWING.

DOCTOR:

(GETTING UP) Thank you! Very kind of you to come to our aid. The thing is, we're a little lost!

HORSE TROTS UP.

INGER:

You are in Isenfel. I cannot welcome you. That is the task of my mother. The Queen.

LAST YELP OF SNOWBEAST KILLED.

TEGAN:

Is she a fan of bloodsports too?

TURLOUGH:

You could be a little more grateful, Tegan. Those things meant business.

INGER:

Load the carcasses onto the cart. (TURNING HORSE) Jesper, Torsten, Ivan. Over here. We shall each take a passenger.

HORSEMEN APPROACH.

INGER:

Jesper. You take this man.

JESPER:

Yes, my lady. (HELPING DOCTOR) Here, sir. Take my hand.

DOCTOR:

(CLIMBING UP) Thank you. I'm the Doctor and-

INGER:

(INTERRUPTING) I said save your introductions. The women can ride with these two huntsmen. (TO HUNTSMEN) Help them up.

NYSSA AND TEGAN MOUNT OTHER HORSES THROUGH:

NYSSA:

(CLIMBING UP) Thank you.

TEGAN:

(CLIMBING UP) I can manage. I've had quite a bit of practice recently...

DOCTOR:

(CALLING) Hold tight, everyone. And what about-

INGER:

(INTERRUPTING) I will take this one. (TROTS TOWARDS TURLOUGH) Your name?

TURLOUGH:

Turlough. (CLIMBING UP) Thank you... I presume you're of royal descent, Princess...?

INGER:

Inger. And you? With your hair the shade of glowing embers. What manner of man are you?

TURLOUGH:

A cold one.

INGER:

(SPURRING HORSE) Yah!

HORSES TROT OFF.

SCENE 7: INT. PALACE, BALANCING CHAMBER

WHIRRING, TICKING LIKE CLOCKWORK AND GEIGER COUNTERS INSIDE AN ENCLOSED UNDERGROUND ICE CHAMBER.

SKARSGARD:

(MUTTERING TO SELF) The balance is disturbed. Too many. There are too many...

USING TICKING CONTROLS. A TINKLING OF THE HOLOGRAPHIC DISPLAY ACTIVATING.

SKARSGARD:

Nine thousand five hundred and eighty-six. No, nine thousand five hundred and eighty-five...

MORE TINKLING HOLOGRAPHIC DISPLAY.

SKARSGARD:

Now the numbers are falling. But they are still too high. The energies are in flux. The digits are not constant. I must know... How many?

SCENE 8: **INT. PALACE, HALL**

HUGE DOORS OPENED. FOOTSTEPS ON ICY FLOORS. A PALACE MADE OF ICE WITH GLASSY FLOORS AND SLIDING, SCRAPING DOORS.

INGER:

Wait here. You will be presented to the royal house.

INGER EXITS ALONG CORRIDOR. TARDIS CREW PACE IN HUGE ICE HALL.

TEGAN:

Talk about a snow queen. This whole palace, it's carved out of ice.

NYSSA:

It's beautiful.

TURLOUGH:

I'd sooner have central heating.

DOCTOR:

While we're waiting... Nyssa, try the tracker again. See if we're any closer to our missing stabiliser?

NYSSA:

(SEARCHING) Oh no... I must have dropped it when we ran from those creatures!

DOCTOR:

Ah. That's not the best news. Not to worry. I'm sure we'll think of something...

FOOTSTEPS IN CORRIDOR AS KARLINA AND ENTOURAGE APPROACH.

TEGAN:

Someone's coming!

DOCTOR:

Now smile, everyone. Be polite. It's amazing how far it can get you.

KARLINA AND INGER ENTER WITH COURTIERS.

KARLINA:

You are all welcome to Isenfel. For now.

INGER:

Mother. These strangers were in the outer wilds. Like the other. And there was more black snow.

KARLINA:

Visitors have been a rarity in the past. But not of late, it seems. We welcome any enlightenment they might bring.

DOCTOR:

Excuse me, your highness. Do you mean to say you've had other guests recently?

KARLINA:

Questions. So soon? Before we have exchanged introductions?

DOCTOR:

Of course. I'm sorry.

TURLOUGH:

Be polite you said.

INGER:

(ANNOUNCING) My mother. Queen Karlina of Isenfel.

DOCTOR:

Your majesty. I'm the Doctor. This is Tegan, Nyssa and Turlough. My friends and I are most grateful for Princess Inger's assistance. And your kind hospitality.

KARLINA:

(WALKING AROUND THEM) Doctor? A man of learning? Such a range of aspects you have. The boy with his fiery crown. And the women, so dark. So different. You, Doctor, you are more like a man of Isenfel. Except in your unseemly haste.

DOCTOR:

I apologise again, your majesty. It's been rather a difficult day.

KARLINA:

Do not concern yourself. We take no offence. — We will offer you accommodation. We may talk on any subject you wish at our feast tonight.

DOCTOR:

I... look forward to it. Thank you.

KARLINA SWEEPS OUT

NYSSA:

(CLOSE) She seems friendly enough.

TEGAN:

(CLOSE) You call that friendly?

DOCTOR:

(CLOSE) Compared to some of the monarchs I've met, she was positively chummy.

NYSSA:

Do you think she can help us?

DOCTOR:

Let's hope so.

INGER:

(APPROACHING) This way. Our servants will take you to an ante-chamber while rooms are prepared.

DOCTOR:

Thank you. Through here, everyone.

THEY WALK TO CORRIDOR. INGER CATCHES TURLOUGH.

INGER:

One moment, Sir Turlough. —

TURLOUGH:

What? Oh. Yes?

INGER:

I shall find you later. I have arranged a place for you at my table. We sit with the huntsmen.

TURLOUGH:

Oh... er... Thank you.

INGER WALKS OFF.

TEGAN:

You've done all right for yourself. A princess!

TURLOUGH:

Some people just recognise good breeding.

TEGAN:

Breeding? Ha! She'd eat you alive.

THEY FOLLOW THE OTHERS OUT

SCENE 9: INT. PALACE CORRIDOR

KARLINA WALKS WITH GUARDS. ROMY ENTERS CORRIDOR.

KARLINA:

(CALLING) Our servant! Madam Romy! Here!

ROMY:

(APPROACHING) Yes, your Majesty.

KARLINA:

Open up the lower chambers. We would use the rooms down there for our guests.

ROMY:

(WORRIED) My lady. Those chambers have not been used since your father was alive. Would it not [be better-]

KARLINA:

(INTERRUPTING) Then it is time they saw some life.

ROMY:

Sorry, my lady. I did not mean to speak out of turn.

KARLINA:

See that it is done.

ROMY:

Yes, your Majesty.

KARLINA CARRIES ON PAST.

MUSIC SEGUE:

SCENE 10: INT. PALACE, BALANCING CHAMBER

WHIRRING, TICKING B/G

SKARSGARD:

Equilibrium is disturbed. This cannot be sustained.

USING CLOCKWORK CONTROLS. TINKLING HOLOGRAMS ACTIVATED.

SKARSGARD:

Tell me. What must be done? How many to restore the balance?

ICE DOOR SLIDES OPEN. KARLINA ENTERS. DOOR CLOSSES BEHIND

KARLINA:

You talk to your machines again, Balancer Skarsgard?

SKARSGARD:

It is my duty and my function, your highness. For the stability of the kingdom. Isenfel be constant.

KARLINA:

Isenfel be constant. We have more visitors. Yet not one appeared throughout the whole of my father's reign, nor the reign of his father before him.

SKARSGARD:

I know, my lady.

KARLINA:

Now it seems we are inundated. Why? Is it a sign? Is there some... change to come?

SKARSGARD:

That is why I consult my machines. They will have the answer soon. They always do.

KARLINA:

I hope they do not say we have done wrong. We try to rule a fair and equitable kingdom.

SKARSGARD:

It is no fault of yours, my lady. It is the Balancing. That is all.

KARLINA:

Yes. But sometimes...

TAPPING ON ICE DOOR.

INGER:

(OUTSIDE) Mother! Are you in there?

KARLINA:

(CALLING) Yes, daughter?

DOOR SLIDES OPEN.

INGER:

The table is not yet set, but this 'Doctor' is already in the great hall. He asks many questions.

KARLINA:

I sense he has an inquiring mind.

INGER:

The other guests are starting to arrive.

KARLINA:

Then we shall not keep them waiting. Skarsgard?

SKARSGARD:

The Balancing will reveal itself presently. I shall keep you informed, my lady.

KARLINA:

(EXITING) Very good. Accompany us to our chambers, Inger. You might at least brush your hair.

ICE-DOOR CLOSES, KARLINA AND INGER DEPART ALONG CORRIDOR.

SCENE 11: INT. PALACE KITCHENS

JESPER CARRIES A BOX OF SUPPLIES IN. KITCHEN ACTIVITY, PLATES, PANS RATTLING B/G. ROMY WALKS BACK AND FORTH LOADING PLATES ON TRAYS THROUGHOUT.

JESPER:

Where do you want the sweetmeats, Madam Romy?

ROMY:

(COMING OVER) There. By the ovens. Since when have you called me Madam?

JESPER:

(CARRYING BOX) I can show my wife respect, can I not? (PUTS DOWN BOX)

ROMY:

(KINDLY) Only when you want something. Stay out of the way. And away from the food!

JESPER:

Some of those courtiers can spare a little from their plates, I dare say.

JESPER MAKES TO TAKE FOOD. ROMY SLAPS HIS HAND AWAY.

ROMY:

Hush, Jesper. Leave them. (CLOSE) Do not worry, I have set some aside for the children.

JESPER:

(CLOSE) Good. I will collect it later. I was there when we found the new strangers, you know.

ROMY:

(PUTTING PLATES DOWN) I heard there are four of them? So many..

JESPER:

I know... We must hope the Queen makes her decision quickly.

ROMY:

(TAKING HIM TO ONE SIDE, CLOSER) Jesper. Queen Karlina has ordered them housed in the lower corridors.

JESPER:

(GRUNT OF DISAPPROVAL, CLOSE) Then you had better keep a close eye on them.

ROMY:

I shall, husband. Now go.

JESPER:

(LEAVING) I am gone!

FOLLOW JESPER INTO CORRIDOR:

SCENE 12: INT. PALACE CORRIDOR (CONTINUOUS)

JESPER WALKING, SKARSGARD APPROACHES.

JESPER:

(WALKING) Balancer Skarsgard. Not often we see you abroad in the servants' quarters.

SKARSGARD:

(WALKING) My duties take me wherever I am needed. (STOPS) Perhaps you can help. I am looking for the steward.

JESPER:

(STOPS) He's in the kitchens. (BEAT) May I enquire...?

SKARSGARD:

You may not.

JESPER:

Of course. It is not my business. (MOVES ON)

SKARSGARD:

(CALLING AFTER) Sir Jesper.

JESPER:

(STOPPING) Yes, Lord Balancer?

SKARSGARD:

Apologies if I seem abrupt. You do know the Balancer serves only the greater good.

JESPER:

Yes, my lord.

SKARSGARD:

You met the strangers. What did you make of them?

JESPER:

Peculiar-looking. But harmless. One has the appearance of a man of Isenfel. But the others... I've never seen the like.

SKARSGARD:

Thank you. I can tell you that today I am occupied with many things. Census histories. Service records. I need to prepare.

JESPER:

Of course. Your work is never-ending is it not, Balancer?

SKARSGARD:

Too true, Sir Jesper. I shall not detain you. Isenfel be constant.

SKARSGARD WALKS OFF TO KITCHEN

JESPER:

Isenfel be constant. (SOTTO, BITTER) But for some, things end all too soon. Balancer Skarsgard.

SCENE 13: **INT. PALACE CORRIDOR**

TURLOUGH WALKS ALONG CORRIDOR.

TURLOUGH:

(TO SELF) I wonder what's for dinner... (SEES INGER) Ah.

INGER:

Sir Turlough! (APPROACHES) You have lost your handmaidens?

TURLOUGH:

My... er...? Oh, I see. They take rather a long time to get ready. You know what girls are like. (BEAT) Or maybe you don't.

INGER:

Are they promised to you? Either of them?

TURLOUGH:

(LAUGHS) Please, no! I've done nothing to deserve that.

INGER:

You are unusual, Sir Turlough.

TURLOUGH:

I'll take that as a compliment. (BEAT) I should warn you, I-

INGER:

(INTERRUPTING) Come with me on a night-hunt. After the feast.

TURLOUGH:

Hunting... what?

INGER:

The snowbeasts of course. They like the light of the stars. That is when most are abroad.

TURLOUGH:

Ah. Tempting as it is to venture into the freezing cold, looking for monsters who want to rip me to shreds, I think I'd rather get some rest.

INGER:

You play the game, Sir Turlough. You will be persuaded. I am sure.

SHE WALKS OFF

TURLOUGH:

(SOTTO) No. I really won't.

SCENE 14: **INT. ANOTHER PALACE CORRIDOR**

TEGAN WALKING ALONG ICY CORRIDOR

TEGAN:

(TO SELF) Why is it they always put the bathroom miles away from anywhere [useful...?]

CHILD'S CRY, VERY DISTANT – DISTORTED BY ECHOING CORRIDORS.

TEGAN:

What was that? – Hello? Hello...?

ROMY HURRIES ALONG CORRIDOR TOWARDS TEGAN

ROMY:

(APPROACHING) Are you lost, mistress?

TEGAN:

I was just on my way back from the... oh, never mind.

ROMY:

Follow me back to your room, mistress. One can easily become lost in the corridors.

ROMY LEADS TEGAN BACK

TEGAN:

(FOLLOWING) Yeah, it's like a maze down here. All these ice tunnels. You'd think it'd feel much colder.

ROMY:

(WALKING) The palace is warmed by the energies of Isenfel. It is protected.

TEGAN:

(WALKING) Protected? Protected from what?

NYSSA:

(APPROACHING FROM OFF) Tegan! – There you are.

ROMY:

It would be best if you both returned to your chambers. You will be summoned to banquet in the great hall shortly. Then you will eat. (ALL STOP OUTSIDE A CHAMBER.) Here is your room, Mistress.

NYSSA:

Thank you. (TO TEGAN) Where did you go?

TEGAN:

I thought I heard something.

NYSSA:

You shouldn't go wandering off. We've no idea what animals they might be keeping here.

TEGAN:

It wasn't an animal. It sounded human.

ROMY:

(COVERING) There are many strange sounds in the lower tunnels. The warming and the cooling... The movement of the air can play tricks on the ears. (BEAT) Is there anything else, my mistresses?

TEGAN:

You don't have to keep calling us that. We've got names.

ROMY:

(UNSURE) I'm sorry, my lady. I don't mean to offend.

NYSSA:

That's all right, go about your business. We shall wait to be summoned.

ROMY:

Thank you, young mistress. (WALKS OFF)

TEGAN:

I can't bear all this bowing and scraping. It just isn't right.

NYSSA:

That's your problem, Tegan. These people have a very clearly defined place in their world. We shouldn't confuse them. We don't have any idea of the rules.

TEGAN:

You think they're happy being slaves?

NYSSA:

No. I mean we don't know that they are slaves. And we don't want to disturb the order of things. We just want to leave with as little fuss as possible.

SCENE 15: **INT. PALACE HALL [SOME TIME LATER]**

FADE UP. MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT, ICE FLUTES, NORDIC MEDIEVAL STYLE. MUSIC ENDS. POLITE APPLAUSE.

KARLINA:

Thank you. Now. We may eat.

DOCTOR:

Your flautists are very accomplished, your highness. It's no mean feat to play an instrument while it melts.

KARLINA:

That is the skill of all in Isenfel. To make the most of our environment while maintaining its form.

DOCTOR:

Interesting. Have your people been settled here long?

KARLINA:

Many generations. Balancer Skarsgard keeps the records. Perhaps in a few years I will be content to look over the past.

DOCTOR:

I'm sure your dotage is a long way off.

KARLINA:

You flatter me, Doctor. But not all on Isenfel are able to enjoy so long a life. (BEAT) Your wards have arrived.

DOCTOR:

My...? Oh, yes.

TEGAN AND NYSSA APPROACH TABLE

KARLINA:

(CALLING) Join us, ladies.

TEGAN:

(SOTTO) Why do I feel like I've come to an ABBA tribute night?

KARLINA:

What does your friend say?

DOCTOR:

She was just noting how your people have a very distinct look. (TO TEGAN) Polite, remember, Tegan.

TEGAN:

I'm only saying. All the blonde hair, blue eyes.

NYSSA:

Recessive traits can become common when communities are confined in one area. A small genetic pool, specially adapted to their environment.

DOCTOR:

But don't forget, even across different humanoid species hereditary markers can vary considerably. (BEAT) And as we're in E-Space, well...

KARLINA:

(INTERRUPTS) Such language! Such ideas! You are scientists? All of you?

TEGAN:

Not me. I'm just a tourist.

NYSSA:

Sit down, Tegan. – Thank you, your highness.

NYSSA AND TEGAN SIT. SERVANTS BRING PLATES.

KARLINA:

Please, eat. And afterwards, you will meet our Royal Balancer.

TEGAN:

Balancer?

DOCTOR:

I imagine he's some kind of accountant. Keeper of the royal records. Holder of the purse strings. That sort of thing. Am I right, your majesty?

KARLINA:

You may call me Karlina, Doctor. You have a curious nature, I sense.

TEGAN:

Oh yes. The Doctor's nosy all right.

DOCTOR:

Tuck in, why don't you, Tegan?

TEGAN:

(WHISPER, TO NYSSA) Tuck in? To what? I've seen bigger drumsticks on a kookaburra.

NYSSA:

(CLOSE) You saw what it's like outside. I'm surprised they can farm anything.

TEGAN:

I think I'll stick with the salad. (PICKS UP HANDFUL OF DRY REEDS) Or rather... the dried leaves?

KARLINA:

(ACROSS TABLE) The snowrushes are most nourishing. Their flavour is bitter, but there are strong energies within.

TEGAN:

(TO KARLINA) Thank you, your majesty.

NYSSA:

(TO KARLINA) It all looks very... appetising, your highness.

NYSSA LOADS SOME FOOD ON HER PLATE.

TEGAN:

(TO NYSSA) At least Turlough seems to be enjoying himself over on the huntsmen's table. With his new girlfriend..

CROSS TO:

SCENE 16: INT. PALACE HALL, INGER'S TABLE (CONTINUOUS)

FEASTING B/G. INGER POURS A GOBLET.

INGER:

More mead, Sir Turlough? My mother keeps a fine cellar.

TURLOUGH:

Thank you. Tell me more about this... hunt of yours?

INGER:

We venture out, under cover of the Isenfel night. The snowbeasts prowl in greater number once darkness falls.

TURLOUGH:

Snowbeasts... Those wolf-things. Is the hunting just for sport, or do you...

INGER:

(INTERRUPTING) We hunt the beasts. And so we kill them. What would be the point of it otherwise? They must be culled.

TURLOUGH:

(EATING) I see. And what do you do with them afterwards?

INGER:

We wear their skins. Burn their fat in candles. (BEAT) You are eating the flesh of one of them now.

TURLOUGH:

(SPITTING OUT FOOD) What? I thought it was chicken!

INGER:

What is... chicken?

TURLOUGH:

Never mind. I've suddenly lost my appetite.

CROSS BACK TO:

SCENE 17: INT. PALACE HALL (CONTINUOUS)

PLATES AND FOOD BEING PASSED. HUBBUB OF COURTIERS AT TABLE.

DOCTOR:

Thank you again, Karlina. I hope we shan't impose on you for too long.

KARLINA:

Stay as long as you wish, Doctor. Your company is most illuminating. We have little 'science' here.

DOCTOR:

It's not the be-all and end-all. I'm sure, given time, your people's skills will develop.

KARLINA:

We have had much time already. But the mysteries of our world are still largely unknown.

DOCTOR:

Well, there's no rush. You've music, culture, craftsmanship. Above all, you too seem to have a healthy sense of curiosity. It's a very good start.

KARLINA:

Nothing will change here. Not for a long while.

DOCTOR:

What makes you say that? (BEAT) Your daughter mentioned a stranger when we arrived. You said Isenfel does not have many visitors?

KARLINA:

It is a very rare occurrence.

DOCTOR:

But there was one recently? Before us?

KARLINA:

A vessel appeared. A thing from the stars.

DOCTOR:

Yes. We noticed some debris on the ice.

KARLINA:

We saw its falling lights, several nights ago.

DOCTOR:

And that's how this stranger arrived?

KARLINA:

A man was found in the wreckage. You must understand. We meet very few travellers from... outside. A handful over several generations. But now... you are so many.

DOCTOR:

This man's name, was it 'Solus'?

KARLINA:

Yes. I believe it was. Balancer Skarsgard was the one who tended him.

DOCTOR:

He was unwell?

KARLINA:

Alas, he was terribly injured when his carriage crashed into the ice.

DOCTOR:

He was badly injured before the crash – er, quite possibly. Tell me, is this Solus still here? Somewhere in the palace?

KARLINA:

Unfortunately, his wounds meant he could not survive.

DOCTOR:

I see. (BEAT) Was he carrying anything? A glowing red crystal, perhaps?

KARLINA:

You would have to ask the Balancer these questions. (STANDING) Our musicians are ready once again. (CALLING) Please. Play for our guests.

KARLINA CLAPS. MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT BEGINS AGAIN.

CROSS TO:

SCENE 18: **INT. PALACE CORRIDOR, OUTSIDE HALL**

FEASTING AND MUSIC IN HALL, OFF. SKARSGARD LEADING 4 x SERVANTS (INC ROMY) TO STOP.

SKARSGARD:

You four, wait here a moment. Prepare yourselves for your Queen.

JESPER:

(RUNNING UP) Lord Balancer Skarsgard! Lord Balancer, sir!

ROMY:

(WHISPER) Jesper! No!

JESPER:

(CATCHING UP, PLEADING) Please, sir. I have only just heard! Madam Romy is my wife. I would go in her stead.

SKARSGARD:

You know the rules, Jesper. This is her turn. We do not question the Balancing.

JESPER:

Please.

SKARSGARD:

Your mother and father did the same. As did Romy's. As did their parents before them. It cannot be changed. Not for anyone.

JESPER:

I am sorry. Lord Balancer. It does not seem fair.

SKARSGARD:

There is no fair, or unfair. Only perpetual balance. Isenfel be constant. (BEAT, FIRMER) Isenfel be constant.

JESPER:

(MUTTERED) Isenfel be constant.

SKARSGARD:

(TO SERVANTS) You four, your Queen awaits. Now, follow!

SKARSGARD WALKS ON WITH SERVANTS, ENTERING HALL. CROSS TO:

SCENE 19: INT. PALACE HALL, INGER'S TABLE (CONTINUOUS)

FEASTING B/G, FLUTE MUSIC CONTINUES

INGER:

You are enjoying our music, Sir Turlough?

TURLOUGH:

It's very... long.

INGER:

Good. My mother is making arrangements for you to stay. – Ah, here they come now.

SKARSGARD LEADS SERVANTS INTO HALL.

TURLOUGH:

Who are those people?

INGER:

Servants. This will not take much time. We can be on our way soon.

CROSS TO:

SCENE 20: INT. PALACE HALL (CONTINUOUS)

MUSIC COMES TO AN END. POLITE APPLAUSE. SKARSGARD LEADS SERVANTS ACROSS CHAMBER.

DOCTOR:

Ah, this must be the Balancer.

KARLINA:

Indeed, Doctor. Now, excuse me while I perform my official duties.

SERVANTS ASSEMBLE BEFORE THE QUEEN'S TABLE. HALL FALLS QUIET.

SKARSGARD:

Here, my lady. We have four guests in Isenfel. So I bring four servants.

NYSSA:

We've no need of servants, your majesty.

SKARSGARD:

They are not for your use, young mistress. (CALLING) Behold, the Gauge of Equilibrium. (HOLDS UP BALANCING ROD)

GEIGER-COUNTER-LIKE RATTLING FROM THE ROD

PEOPLE:

(MURMUR, LIKE A PRAYER RESPONSE) The Gauge of Equilibrium.

KARLINA:

(STANDING) It is the time of the Balancing. Equilibrium must be maintained.

PEOPLE:

(MURMUR) Equilibrium.

TEGAN:

Doctor, what's going on?

DOCTOR:

I'm not entirely sure. (TO KARLINA) Queen Karlina-

KARLINA:

(CUTTING HIM OFF) Silence, please. (TO ALL) These strangers are pleasing to us. We would have them remain in our company. And so the price must be paid. Isenfel be constant.

DOCTOR:

(TO TEGAN AND NYSSA) Four of them, four of us. Oh no.

NYSSA:

What is it?

TEGAN:

Yeah, what's the problem?

DOCTOR:

Four of them, four of us. Don't you see?!

PEOPLE:

(MUTTERED AROUND ROOM, UNDER PREVIOUS) Isenfel be constant.

KARLINA:

On your knees. Romy. Helgar. Petra. Lars. You have served us well. We thank you.

SERVANTS KNEEL.

SKARSGARD:

Ready weapons!

GUARDS DRAW SWORDS.

TEGAN:

What are they doing? Doctor, what's going on?

KARLINA:

Fare thee well in the next life, good citizens of Isenfel. You die in the knowledge that you preserve the balance of our kingdom.

DOCTOR:

(LEAPING UP) Your majesty, no! Please, not on our account!

KARLINA:

Skarsgard. Execute them.

END OF PART ONE

PART TWO

REPRISE:

KARLINA:

Fare thee well in the next life, good citizens of Isenfel. You die in the knowledge that you preserve the balance of our kingdom.

DOCTOR:

(LEAPING UP) Your majesty, no! Please, not on our account!

KARLINA:

Skarsgard. Execute them.

CONTINUES INTO:

SCENE 21: INT. PALACE HALL (CONTINUOUS)

DOCTOR LEAPS TABLE AND RUNS FORWARD. SWORDSMEN HESITATE.

DOCTOR:

Please! Whatever your traditions dictate, I can't allow this to happen!

KARLINA:

You stand in the way of our swordsmen? This is most unusual.

TURLOUGH:

(CALLING) Doctor! What's going on?

DOCTOR:

(CALLING) Stay there, Turlough. I'm sure this can all be sorted out amicably.

KARLINA:

(APPROACHING) Your confusion is understandable. You do not know our tradition.

TEGAN:

It's tradition to slaughter the waiting staff when you invite someone over to dinner?

CLICKING FROM SKARSGARD'S GAUGE.

SKARSGARD:

The Balancing... The Balancing is disturbed..

DOCTOR:

Believe me, if there's some kind of population control in operation, we are more than happy to leave just as soon as we can.

SKARSGARD:

(READING GAUGE) This is not right...

KARLINA:

You do not wish to enjoy our hospitality? But we hope to learn so much from you, Doctor.

DOCTOR:

Then the first lesson is to stop these needless killings. Going ahead with this barbaric 'tradition' doesn't encourage me to teach you anything.

SKARSGARD:

My lady! The gauge. It is changing.

DOCTOR:

(CURIOUS) Let me take a look at that.

SKARSGARD:

(SNATCHING GAUGE AWAY) No. It is forbidden. Only the Balancer may hold it.

DOCTOR:

All right. So what is your 'Gauge of Equilibrium' telling you?

SKARSGARD:

The energies... they are shifting.

DOCTOR:

If you want my help, I suggest you enlighten me a little further.

KARLINA:

Not here. We should not disturb the court any more than it is already.

KARLINA CLAPS.

KARLINA:

(CALLING) The feast is over. It seems Isenfel is undecided as to how to account for our guests. For a little while at least. All of you. Return to your dwellings.

PEOPLE:

(START TO MOVE OFF, CONFUSED MUTTERINGS EG:) The feast is over?/ Isenfel undecided?/ What's all this about?

KARLINA:

(CALLING) We thank our servants for their loyalty. Isenfel be constant.

PEOPLE:

(MUTTERED RESPONSES AS THEY LEAVE) Isenfel be constant.

NYSSA:

(CLOSE) Doctor, what's happening here?

DOCTOR:

(CLOSE) Whatever it is, it's clearly ingrained. I suggest we tread carefully and do as they say. For now.

TEGAN:

(CLOSE) Those servants were all so calm about it, happy to be led like lambs to the slaughter. How can any queen justify treating her people like that?

DOCTOR:

(CLOSE) I don't know. But I'm going to find out.

SCENE 22: **EXT. TUNDRA**

JESPER AND ROMY WALKING OVER ICE TOWARDS VILLAGE

JESPER:

Are you all right? Romy? You have not spoken since we left the hall.

ROMY:

I was ready, Jesper. I was ready for death. But all I could think of was them. The poor little mites. We no longer have Marta to help us. If anything happened to you, they'll have no-one.

JESPER:

You are right. I have spoken with Caspar and Ella. I think they will join with us. Assist us.

ROMY:

Maybe these strangers will change things.

JESPER:

The other one didn't. We cannot rely on outsiders. We need to do this ourselves.

COMMOTION OF VILLAGERS MOVING CARTS, ANIMALS, OFF. THEY STOP. STATIC-LIKE WHITE NOISE OF BLACK SNOW, DISTANT.

VILLAGERS:

(CALLING) Get clear! Move away.

ROMY:

There's a commotion in the village.

JESPER:

The black snow falls so close.

ROMY:

The Balancer should have taken me. I should have let it happen. Now we are paying the price.

GOATS BLEATING. OLD MAN TRYING TO HERD THEM

JESPER:

No. The black snow comes most nights now. It will require more than a few of Gerhard's goats to pay for those strangers' lives.

ROMY:

It should have been me. Only a human life can balance a human life.

JESPER:

We're supposed to be equal. But the privileged are protected. You know that. And you know why the black snow is really coming. We both do, Romy.

ROMY:

We must do something...

JESPER:

(CALLING) Gerhard! Get away! Leave them! (TO ROMY) The old fool. He should let the animals go.

ROMY:

I know I shouldn't feel relieved. I shouldn't fear the Balancing. But I do.

JESPER:

I know, woman. So do I. So do others. Now get yourself home. Stew some tea. I'll stop our neighbour getting himself killed. (CALLING) Gerhard!

JESPER RUNS TO HELP.

ROMY:

(TO SELF) No. I don't want to die. I'm not ready. Not yet.

SCENE 23: INT. PALACE CHAMBER

ICE DOOR SLIDES CLOSED. TEGAN AND NYSSA WALK INSIDE.

TEGAN:

I knew there was something fishy going on. What kind of society treats its servants like that?

NYSSA:

Those people were so calm. They didn't question it.

TEGAN:

You still think they should know their place?

NYSSA:

I admit. It's shocking to us. But it seems to be embedded. Everyone accepts this is the way things are.

TEGAN:

That Balancer bloke. The Doctor thought he was like... an accountant. But even the taxman doesn't want you beheaded.

NYSSA:

At least the Queen was willing to talk to the Doctor. Maybe there's something he can do.

TEGAN:

There should be something we can do too.

SLIDES OPEN ICE DOOR.

TEGAN:

Our escorts have disappeared. At least we're not prisoners. –

FOLLOW THEM INTO CORRIDOR.

NYSSA:

The Doctor told us to stay in our rooms.

TEGAN:

What if they're keeping people prisoner? What if there's a whole jail full of willing human sacrifices? – Look, we've got to do something!

NYSSA:

We can't go trampling over their traditions. You've seen what happens. These people are used to killing.

TEGAN SLIDES ICE DOOR SHUT.

TEGAN:

All right. We'll trample... carefully. Come on. I heard something down this way before...

THEY WALK DOWN CORRIDOR.

SCENE 24: **EXT. OUTSIDE PALACE STABLES**

HORSES BEING LED OUT. INGER TACKING UP 2 x HORSES THROUGH:

TURLOUGH:

You want me to what?!

DOCTOR:

Humour her. She's obviously taken a liking to you.

INGER:

(CALLING) Hurry, Sir Turlough. You promised me. The sooner we leave, the sooner your Doctor friend can attend my mother.

DOCTOR:

(INTERRUPTING) Thank you, your highness. I shan't keep your riding companion a moment.

TURLOUGH:

Doctor, this Princess is clearly psychotic.

DOCTOR:

At the moment the royal family of Isenfel is still inclined to be friendly towards us. There's no reason to lose that advantage.

TURLOUGH:

But those creatures are out there-

DOCTOR:

(INTERRUPTING) The Princess and her Huntsmen are used to dealing with them. By the time you all get back, I'm sure I'll have everything sorted out and we'll be ready for the off.

TURLOUGH:

Despite the TARDIS being under several metres of ice?

DOCTOR:

I haven't forgotten. In fact, I suspect it's the TARDIS that's given us this opportunity.

TURLOUGH:

What? How?

DOCTOR:

(MUSING) But when her self-diagnostics kick in, I'm not sure we'll have very much longer...

TURLOUGH:

What are you talking about?

DOCTOR:

I suspect it's all a question of energy conservation.

INGER LEADS HORSE OVER

INGER:

Here. Sir Turlough. Your steed.

DOCTOR:

Up you get, Turlough. It's like riding a bike. Only with legs.

TURLOUGH:

I never ride bikes. If I fall off and break my neck, I blame you. (EFFORTS AS MOUNTS HORSE)

DOCTOR:

(IGNORING HIM) That's the spirit.

DOCTOR SLAPS HORSE'S FLANK. IT CANTERS OFF.

TURLOUGH:

(CRIES OUT AS HORSE RUNS AWAY WITH HIM)

INGER:

(ON HORSE) So eager, Sir Turlough. Wait for me! (CLICKS TONGUE; JINGLES TACK; HORSE CANTERS OFF)

DOCTOR:

(TO SELF) Now... How to change a society's entire belief system overnight? (ENTERING CASTLE) Why can't I ever just go horse-riding...?

SCENE 25: INT. BALANCING CHAMBER

CLICKING, WHIRRING BALANCING CHAMBER B/G. DOOR SLIDES OPEN.

SKARSGARD:

Enter, my lady, please.

KARLINA:

We are curious, Balancer. Our kingdom makes an exception for this Doctor and his friends.

SKARSGARD:

I have never seen such a thing before.

KARLINA:

What do your signs and numbers say? What does the Gauge of Equilibrium tell you?

CLICKING OF GAUGE. TINKLING EFFECT CONTINUING THROUGH AS HOLOGRAPHIC READOUTS ARE ACTIVATED.

SKARSGARD:

'Recalibration'... this word is new to me.

KARLINA:

I have summoned this Doctor to the Balancing Chamber. Maybe he can aid our understanding.

SKARSGARD:

You invite a stranger here? How can one not of Isenfel come to understand Isenfel?

KARLINA:

Perhaps the picture is seen clearer from without, not within.

SKARSGARD:

My lady-

KARLINA:

My guardsmen will escort him once Inger has taken the boy on her hunt. He will be here soon.

SKARSGARD:

I see you will not be turned from this course. You were always headstrong. Even as a girl.

KARLINA:

I used to come and watch these lights and symbols dance across the ice back then.

SKARSGARD:

I should guard the secrets of the Balancing more carefully. (SHUTS OFF TINKLING HOLOGRAPHS) You should not have been in here unsupervised.

KARLINA:

My father knew I came.

SKARSGARD:

He was a good man. He knew his duty. I know the villagers suspect the rules do not apply to the high-born. But the Balancing is clear. Each family must make way for every new addition.

KARLINA:

After Inger was born, Gustav and I would come here too. Just to get away from everyone.

SKARSGARD:

I was aware of this transgression, at least, my lady. I thought you both deserved some private time. Prince Gustav was also a good man.

BEAT OF SILENCE.

KARLINA:

I have been thinking long on my husband's death. And the more I think... the more it appears to be without meaning. Our child did not survive six winters.

SKARSGARD:

There is no knowing the ways of the Balancing.

KARLINA:

Then perhaps it is time we learned.

SKARSGARD:

That is why you hold this stranger to your bosom? It does not sit well with me.

KARLINA:

Be careful, Skarsgard. Do not speak out of turn.

SKARSGARD:

Only, I have observed... When you talk to him, there is a light in your eyes I have not seen for a long time. It is you who should take care, majesty.

KARLINA:

This is an opportunity, Skarsgard. Something my father never had. A chance to gain greater knowledge.

SKARSGARD:

You assume that greater knowledge is for the best. Where Isenfel is concerned, that may not be true.

SCENE 26: **EXT. ICE PLAIN**

6 x HORSES GALLOP ALONG.

INGER:

(CALLING) The ride is thrilling, is it not, Sir Turlough?

TURLOUGH:

(CALLING) That's one word for it.

INGER:

Halt. Here. (ALL PULL UP THEIR HORSES THROUGH:) There is a nest beyond that ridge. I spied a giant beast these last few nights.

TURLOUGH:

Then maybe we shouldn't get too close.

INGER:

Torsten. Go ahead and find the trail.

HUNSTMAN:

(CALLING) At your command, Princess. Yah! (SPURS HORSE AND RIDES ON)

INGER:

We seek the pack leader, no less. Its head would be quite a prize to set above my mother's hearth.

TURLOUGH:

While you stew the rest of it up for dinner. Yes, I can quite believe- (BREAKS OFF)

STATIC CRACKLING OF BLACK SNOW IN DISTANCE.

TURLOUGH:

What's that? Back there, falling from the sky?

INGER:

The black snow?

TURLOUGH:

Yes, we saw it when we arrived. Is it some kind of weather phenomenon?

INGER:

It is something we should stay away from. The black snow dissolves matter.

TURLOUGH:

It does what?

INGER:

It is Isenfel's way of restoring the balance. If we do not do it ourselves, the black snow will come and do it for us. Isenfel be constant.

TURLOUGH:

It's moving over towards the village. It's getting quite close to the houses.

INGER:

It is the peasants' own fault if they do not balance their affairs.

HUNSTMAN'S HORSE APPROACHES.

TURLOUGH:

No-one's very big on empathy here, are they?

HUNSTMAN:

(CALLING, OFF) Majesty. We have the tracks!

INGER:

Come on. Follow me, Sir Turlough. We shall find this beast! Yah!

THEY RIDE ON.

SCENE 27: **INT. PALACE CORRIDOR**

NYSSA AND TEGAN WALKING ON ICE-FLOOR THROUGH:

TEGAN:

It was along here. Listen. Can you hear anything?

NYSSA:

It feels like we're going downhill. Perhaps we should just go back?

TEGAN:

The cellars. Just the place you'd put a dungeon.

NYSSA:

That noise could have been anything. An underground stream, the ice structures shifting. All these corridors... there'll be echoes. Romy said this place could do strange things to sound.

TEGAN:

Yeah. And don't you think she looked more scared talking to us than when the queen was [about to-]

NYSSA:

(CUTS HER OFF) Shh!

A CHILD'S CRY OFF, DISTANT.

TEGAN:

There. That was definitely something.

NYSSA:

(SETTING OFF) It came from this way. You were right, Tegan.

TEGAN:

No. You were right. We should go back and tell the Doctor.

NYSSA:

We've come this far... We should check first. So we've got something to tell him.

TEGAN:

Why are you so keen all of a sudden?

NYSSA:

I can't be absolutely certain... But that sounded like a child.

SCENE 28: INT. PALACE CHAMBER

CLICKING, WHIRRING CLOCKWORK BALANCING CHAMBER B/G.

KNOCK ON ICE DOOR. IT SLIDES OPEN.

DOCTOR:

(AT DOORWAY) Your majesty.

KARLINA:

Welcome, Doctor. This is our Balancing Chamber.

SKARSGARD:

Consider very carefully, my lady. Should we really allow a stranger to know our secrets?

DOCTOR:

(AT DOORWAY) Please believe me. I am here only to help. (BEAT) Will you accept my help, Karlina?

SKARSGARD:

I warn you that no good can- [come]

KARLINA:

(INTERRUPTING) Balancer Skarsgard. I am ruler here. And I say we at least speak with the Doctor. What harm can it do?

SKARSGARD:

But my lady-

KARLINA:

Answer his questions. That is all I wish for now.

DOCTOR:

(ENTERING) Thank you, Karlina. (LOOKING AROUND) So tell me, what exactly are you balancing here?

SKARSGARD:

Everything. All energies must be kept in harmony.

DOCTOR:

Including the people?

KARLINA:

All arrivals require departures. Every birth must be balanced by death.

DOCTOR:

So when the royal family bears another heir, the commoners have to pay with their lives?

KARLINA:

No! Every family takes responsibility for its own. Mine certainly has.

DOCTOR:

I see. So when you said not many reach old age in Isenfel, that's why. They're forced to make way for the next generation.

SKARSGARD:

Not just people. Animals too. Our livestock must be carefully accounted for. The crops, such as they are. All energies that are harnessed and consumed. No excess is permitted.

DOCTOR:

It's impossible to keep account of everything. What about the wildlife we encountered, for a start?

SKARSGARD:

Princess Inger has charge of the culls. She has a quota.

KARLINA:

If we do not do this, then Isenfel settles its own account.

DOCTOR:

How? (BEAT) Please. A little enlightenment won't go amiss. Not if it saves lives.

KARLINA:

That is the problem. We cannot afford to save every life.

DOCTOR:

People can't be regulated like water from a tap.

SKARSGARD:

That is exactly what must happen.

KARLINA:

(DECIDING) Show him, Skarsgard. I command it.

SKARSGARD:

I can only obey. — Here, Doctor. This is the Balancing.

SKARSGARD ACTIVATES EQUILIBRIUM GAUGE. TINKLING HOLOGRAPHIC DISPLAY.

DOCTOR:

Yes, I wanted to ask you about this machinery of yours. Cogs and clockwork, interesting. What's it all for?

SKARSGARD:

Regard the display, Doctor.

DOCTOR:

Numbers on a holographic readout. What're they telling you, Skarsgard?

SKARSGARD:

There should be nine thousand five hundred and eighty-two souls in Isenfel.

KARLINA:

There always have been. And there always will be.

SCENE 29: **EXT. ICE RIDGE**

6 x HORSES GALLOPING ALONG.

INGER:
(CALLING) Halt here.

HUNSTMAN:
(CALLING) Hold, men!

HORSES STOP.

INGER:
Dismount, Sir Turlough.

TURLOUGH:
It'd be a pleasure.

INGER AND TURLOUGH DISMOUNT.

INGER:
Torsten. Stay with the steeds. I will take our visitor closer to the lair.

HUNSTMAN:
Yes, majesty.

TURLOUGH:
Is that wise? I'd be quite happy to see the wildlife from a distance.

CRUNCHING OVER ICE. INGER CROUCHES BY RIDGE AND LOOKS OVER.
SNORING SNOWBEAST FAINT BELOW.

INGER:
(HUSHED) Here, Sir Turlough. — You see the cleft in the ice? That is where it makes its den.

CROUCHING BESIDE HER.

TURLOUGH:
Not the most comfortable of beds.

INGER:
We are close now. I can smell the beast.

TURLOUGH:
(SHIFTS CLOSER) And I can see it. Sleeping. It's huge...

INGER:
Let me string an arrow...

STRINGING ARROW INTO BOW.

TURLOUGH:

You can't expect to kill a beast that size with a single arrow!

INGER:

I do not mean to kill the beast yet, Sir Turlough. Only to wake it. I want to hunt.

TURLOUGH:

What?

INGER:

When I loose this shaft, run for your steed. The beast will be quick. So we must be quicker.

TURLOUGH:

(EDGING BACK) You really are utterly mad. Well, if you're not going to let sleeping dogs lie, I'm getting a head start.

SETS OFF BACK TO HORSE.

INGER:

You want to race, Sir Turlough? That suits me well.

FIRES ARROW. SNOWBEAST ROARS IN ANGER. INGER RUNS FOR HER HORSE.

INGER:

Now the chase is on!

SNOWBEAST SCRAMBLES SNARLING OUT OF ICE AND ONTO PLAIN, GIVES A HUGE ROAR.

SCENE 30: INT. BALANCING CHAMBER

CLICKING BALANCING CHAMBER, WITH TINKLING HOLOGRAMS ACTIVATED.

DOCTOR:

Can't you see how monstrous this is? How long have you been dishing out death sentences on the whim of these... fairy lights?

SKARSGARD:

It has ever been so. And it shall ever be so. Isenfel be constant!

KARLINA:

Isenfel be constant.

DOCTOR:

Isenfel be blowed! I refuse to believe any society can be this blinkered, this stifled, all of its own accord. E-Space or not, this isn't how life works.

SKARSGARD:

This is our way of life. It is no mere belief.

DOCTOR:

No, it's not. Despite the clockwork dressing, the technology behind that display is far beyond the capabilities of a society like yours. (BEAT) Still, now we know what happened to Solus, I suppose.

KARLINA:

I told you. Your fellow stranger's injuries meant that he could not survive.

DOCTOR:

But he didn't die from those injuries, did he?

SKARSGARD:

His presence could not be sustained.

KARLINA:

It made no sense to sacrifice one of my healthy subjects for this man.

DOCTOR:

So you put him to death.

KARLINA:

Yes. (BEAT) Was that wrong?

DOCTOR:

And there we have the nub of the problem.

DOCTOR STARTS PULLING COMPONENTS FROM WALLS. COGS AND WHEELS CLATTER.

SKARSGARD:

Do not touch the sacred machines of the Balancing!

DOCTOR:

(PULLING THINGS FROM WALL) Sacred machines, Skarsgard? That doesn't ring true I'm afraid.

MORE COGS AND WHEELS CLATTER.

KARLINA:

Doctor! We did not ask for this!

SKARSGARD:

(DISTRAUGHT) See, my lady. It was folly to show him! This Doctor would destroy everything!

SCENE 31: **EXT. ICE PLAIN**

HORSES GALLOP IN PURSUIT OF SNARLING, SNAPPING SNOWBEAST

INGER:

(RIDING) There it goes! Keep hard on its trail.

TURLOUGH:

(RIDING) It can't run forever, can it?

INGER:

(RIDING) You do well to keep up with my riders, Sir Turlough. You enjoy yourself after all!

TURLOUGH:

(RIDING) I just don't want to get left behind out here with more of those things!

INGER:

(CALLING) There. It heads between the ice-dunes. Take care now. We are nearing the Edge.

ALL RIDERS SLOW.

TURLOUGH:

The Edge? Of what?

SNARLING RUNNING BEAST SUDDENLY YELPS, OFF.

INGER:

It is injured! Chase it down!

SNOWBEAST HOWLS WITH PAIN, OFF. CRACKLING DISTORTED ROARS DROWN IT OUT.

TURLOUGH:

What was that?

INGER:

I do not know. (CALLING) Advance with care..

SEVERAL CREATURES GROWL AND SNARL, SIMILAR TO SNOWBEAST BUT WITH ENHANCED FX MAKING THE NOISES DISTORTED AND CRACKLE. THEY APPROACH FROM AROUND THE DUNE.

TURLOUGH:

I think we know what finished it off..

INGER:

What are these creatures?

TURLOUGH:

Black snowbeasts. You don't think...

INGER:

What?

TURLOUGH:

That they might perhaps serve the same function as the black snow?

INGER:

I have never seen these monsters before. (STRINGING BOW) But I shall have a new hide to wear... Fire!

INGER AND HUNTERS FIRE ARROW AT THEM. BLACK SNOWBEASTS ROAR AND ARROWS SHIMMER AND DISSOLVE.

TURLOUGH:

They just dissolved your arrows. And they haven't stopped.

HUNTSMAN:

I shall put them to the sword, Princess!

AS HUNTSMAN GALLOPS FORWARD:

TURLOUGH:

No, wait! — Don't you see? You can't kill them, you [idiot!]

BLACK SNOWBEASTS ATTACK. HUNTSMAN SCREAMS AND DISSOLVES FIZZING.

TURLOUGH:

Told you.

INGER:

Back! Come, Sir Turlough. Away from the pack!

TURLOUGH:

Too late! They're coming!

BLACK BEASTS SNARL AND HOWL AND ATTACK THE HUNTSMEN.

SCENE 32: INT. BALANCING CHAMBER

DOCTOR FINISHES PULLING FINAL COGS AND WHEELS FROM WALL – WHIRRING B/G HAS STOPPED. TINKLING HOLOGRAPHIC DISPLAY CONTINUES B/G

SKARSGARD:

You have desecrated the Balancing Chamber. You have destroyed my machines.

DOCTOR:

I've done nothing of the sort. Look. Your holographic interface is functioning perfectly.

KARLINA:

It is true, Skarsgard. The lights still dance. The Balancing continues.

DOCTOR:

(TAPPING ICE, FEELING ALONG WALL) The readouts are being projected into the ice. They're generated from something behind these walls.

KARLINA:

We are beneath the centre of our palace. There are no other chambers to find.

DOCTOR:

All those cogs and wheels were decorations, built up over years. Trinkets, like the Balancer's accoutrements of office.

SKARSGARD:

The symbols of my power!

DOCTOR:

We know about your Gauge of Equilibrium, of course – but what's that thing hanging from your belt? (BEAT) It looks very much like a light-key.

SKARSGARD:

The Lens of Harmony? It is not a key to anything.

DOCTOR:

Of course, you've no reason to think it's a key, if you don't even know there's a door.

KARLINA:

There is only one door into this room. Doctor, you were supposed to provide understanding but you bring only confusion!

DOCTOR:

All right. Answer me one more question and then I'll stop. How many Balancers have there been?

KARLINA:

I do not understand. There has always been a Balancer.

SKARSGARD:

And I am fortunate enough to hold that position.

DOCTOR:

Yes, I thought it was an office, a title. But no, it's only ever been you, hasn't it?

SKARSGARD:

I... am... the Balancer. It is the way it has always been.

KARLINA:

Skarsgard served my father and his father before him.

DOCTOR:

Really? Is that really true? And you don't think there's anything unusual about that?

KARLINA:

It's the way-

DOCTOR:

-it has always been. Yes. So tell, me Karlina. What kind of man lives hundreds, maybe thousands of years while all around him grow old and die? Hm?

KARLINA:

(CONFUSED) It is... Skarsgard... He is the Balancer.

DOCTOR:

Possibly no kind of man at all.

SKARSGARD:

Do not insult me. I am loyal. I am true. I serve Isenfel.

DOCTOR:

That's as maybe. But let's see what happens when we go through the looking glass.

DOCTOR SNATCHES KEY FROM SKARSGARD'S BELT.

SKARSGARD:

What? - No! Give me back the Lens of Harmony!

DOCTOR:

If this is a key – this slot must be the lock, I think. (HE CLICKS KEY INTO PLACE IN ICE WALL)

ICE STARTS SLIDING, WALLS MOVING, SMOOTH ELECTRONIC HUM BEHIND.

DOCTOR:

There, what did I tell you?

KARLINA:

Skarsgard, what is happening?

SKARSGARD:

(AGHAST) The inner chamber is open. (CRIES OUT IN PAIN)
(ELECTRONIC DISTORT, ROBOTIC) Maintenance access granted.
Maintenance access granted.

SCENE 33: INT. LOWER ROOM

SEVERAL CHILDREN OF TODDLER AGE AND BELOW QUIETLY PLAYING THROUGH.

ROMY:

That's it, my loves. You stay quiet. Uncle Jesper will be along soon with milk and biscuits.

TAPPING ON ICE DOOR.

ROMY:

That'll be him now.

DOOR SLIDES OPEN.

NYSSA:

Romy!

ROMY:

Oh no... You!

TEGAN AND NYSSA ENTER.

TEGAN:

So this is what you were hiding!

NYSSA:

Don't be alarmed, Romy. We only want to help you.

TEGAN:

Nyssa... You were right. Little kids! It's like a crèche.

DOOR CLOSES BEHIND THEM.

ROMY:

Oh my mistresses. Please... You should not have come!

NYSSA:

I'm guessing the queen knows nothing of this?

ROMY:

Do not betray us... I beg you.

TEGAN:

Why are you holding all these children prisoner?

ROMY:

No! We are protecting them. Here is the safest place in the kingdom for them.

TEGAN:

Right underneath the queen and her guards?

ROMY:

We have always believed the palace shields the royals from the gaze of the Balancing.

TEGAN:

What do you mean? Shields them?

NYSSA:

I think I understand... You think keeping them here means their families outside don't have to... pay.

DOOR OPENS. JESPER ENTERS.

ROMY:

We are saving the lives of their kin.

TEGAN:

By keeping these kids locked up?

JESPER:

My wife is right. We are saving everybody's lives.

DOOR CLOSES

NYSSA:

Jesper. We need to find our friend. The Doctor will know what to do.

JESPER:

No. (DRAWS SWORD) You both stay where you are.

SCENE 34: **INT. INNER BALANCING CHAMBER**

HUM OF HOLOGRAPHIC CONTROL SYSTEMS. OCCASIONAL CHATTER OF CALCULATION.

DOCTOR:

So this is the secret inside your palace.

SKARSGARD:

(ROBOTIC FX) Isenfel be constant... Isenfel be constant.

KARLINA:

What has happened to Skarsgard? He is bewitched?

DOCTOR:

He's a part of the system.

KARLINA:

These machines... I have never seen the like...

DOCTOR:

You say Isenfel has no science, Karlina? I think you've rather more of it than you realise...

KARLINA:

What is Skarsgard?

DOCTOR:

Good question. I think he's been left to watch over things. A kind of... monitor. (TO SELF) How long has this been running?

DOCTOR TRIES SOME CONTROLS, TINKLY ACTIVATION SOUNDS.

KARLINA:

Should you be touching those devices?

DOCTOR:

How else can I find out what's going on?

KARLINA:

You understand them?

DOCTOR:

(USING CONTROLS) I'm a quick learner. Borusa always said my understanding of logical systems far surpassed my ability to explain them. (USING CONTROLS) Ah, as I thought.

KARLINA:

The Balancing... It is controlled by these screens and lights?

DOCTOR:

Skarsgard here's been taking his duties rather too literally. The system is set to maintain constant energy levels, but it allows for the ebb and flow of life. There are stress factors built into the parameters, see?

KARLINA:

Your words... wash over me...

DOCTOR:

Look, Karlina. You recognise this? (ACTIVATES MAP)

HUM OF MAP DISPLAY.

KARLINA:

It is a map... of my kingdom.

DOCTOR:

Sealed inside an energy dome. The transduction barrier the TARDIS crossed... (TO KARLINA) And what do you think these pulses represent?

BEEPING PULSES.

KARLINA:

Lives. Individuals. My people.

DOCTOR:

The system's at its limit. There's an energy threshold it's meant to maintain. It's adapted. In fact... it's taken it upon itself to create its own means of matter dispersal.

KARLINA:

The black snow?

DOCTOR:

That's right. And maybe something more.

SCENE 35: **EXT. EDGE OF ICE PLAIN**

INGER AND TURLOUGH'S HORSES RACING TOWARDS THE EDGE - AN ENERGY WATERFALL AT THE END OF THE WORLD.

INGER:

Pull up, Sir Turlough!

THEY STOP. INGER DISMOUNTS.

INGER:

We continue on foot. The horses can carry us no more.

TURLOUGH:

(DISMOUNTING) What about your Huntsmen? Are they...?

INGER:

They gave their lives so we could escape the black beasts... But I fear there is no escape. See where they have driven us.

THEY WALK CLOSER TO THE ENERGY WATERFALL.

TURLOUGH:

What is that?

INGER:

It is the edge of our world!

TURLOUGH:

The edge...? You mean the planet just ends right there?

INGER:

Your world does not?

TURLOUGH:

No. Nor does any other I've been to. What's over the edge?

BLACK SNOWBEASTS DISTORTED SNARLING IN DISTANCE APPROACHING.

INGER:

No-one knows. But I fear we may be the first to find out...

SCENE 36: **INT. LOWER ROOM**

JESPER:

(ADVANCES WITH SWORD) You shouldn't have come here, young mistresses.

TEGAN:

Now hold on a minute. Put the sword away!

NYSSA:

Please, we didn't mean any harm!

JESPER:

When I balance your lives against that of my wife, against the lives of these children... I know which way the scales fall.

ROMY:

Jesper, no!

SCENE 37: **EXT. ICE PLAIN**

HORSES WHINNY. DISTORTED SNARLING AS BLACK SNOWBEASTS APPROACH.

TURLOUGH:

What now, Inger? There's nowhere left to run.

INGER:

The steeds are exhausted. Death will be a release for them.

TURLOUGH:

I was thinking more about us.

INGER:

I am glad to have met you. You have been most diverting company, Sir Turlough.

HORSE WHINNYING, DEVOURED BY BLACK SNOWBEAST DISTORTION.

INGER:

(CALLING) Come, creatures of darkness! I am a royal daughter of Isenfel and my spirit will poison you! (CLOSE) When they take me, you must escape.

TURLOUGH:

I'm not leaving you. You really are terribly brave. (SOTTO) Or stupid. I'm not sure which.

SNARLING BLACK SNOWBEASTS CLOSE IN.

INGER:

It is a good day to meet death, is it not?

TURLOUGH:

I've had better...

INGER:

Come here, Sir Turlough. (GRABS TURLOUGH AND KISSES HIM)

TURLOUGH:

(RELEASED) What was- [that for?]

INGER:

(OVER HIM) Thank you. Now run!

TURLOUGH:

Where to? We're trapped between the monsters and the edge of the world!

DISTORTED ROARS OF BLACK SNOWBEASTS.

END OF PART TWO

PART THREE

REPRISE FROM SCENE 36:

NYSSA:

Please, we didn't mean any harm!

JESPER:

When I balance your lives against that of my wife, against the lives of these children... I know which way the scales fall.

ROMY:

Jesper, no!

CONTINUES INTO:

SCENE 38: INT. LOWER CHAMBER [CONTINUOUS]

JESPER:

(WIELDING SWORD) Be quiet, woman. Take the children to the other room. I have no choice!

TEGAN:

You can't be serious...!

DOOR OPENS. DOCTOR RUNS INTO ROOM BETWEEN THEM. CHILDREN CRY IN B/G.

DOCTOR:

Stop this. Now!

NYSSA:

Doctor!

TEGAN:

Talk about cutting it fine!

JESPER:

Stay out of my way, stranger.

DOCTOR:

If you won't listen to me, listen to your queen.

KARLINA ENTERS.

KARLINA:

What is the meaning of this? Jesper? Romy?

ROMY:

Your majesty... I... I-

KARLINA:

Sheathe your weapon, huntsman.

JESPER:

I obey, your highness. (SHEATHES SWORD)

NYSSA:

How did you find us Doctor?

DOCTOR:

You appeared on a map. Along with all these unaccounted lives.

CHILD STARTS CRYING.

KARLINA:

What is this place? A nursery, beneath my feet? How many?

ROMY:

(SETTLING CHILDREN) Sh. Three babes in arms. And four others, all less than three turns old.

KARLINA:

You use the royal palace for your own ends. This litter of children. Who are they? Where did they come from?

ROMY:

The villagers were so afraid, majesty... Kendra has no family... if she gives her life, who looks after her little one? Vorn and Kalla, they are barely twenty, now one of them must die for their child... Helga-

KARLINA:

Enough! All in Isenfel know the price we must pay.

TEGAN:

You mean kill off grandpa so the kids can live?

DOCTOR:

Didn't your uncle cull rabbits to protect his farm? A similar principle. Taken to a ruthless extreme.

TEGAN:

(ANGRY) It's a little bit different from that!

NYSSA:

But you see the Doctor's point? That's why they were so ready to kill to make space for us...

KARLINA:

It is not you who disturb the equilibrium of Isenfel. It is my own people.

DOCTOR:

I'm hoping your 'equilibrium' can be adjusted. I set the control system to re-calibrate and re-align its parameters according to the current energy levels. At least I think I did... (BEAT) Anyway, all matter dispersal should stop, for now.

REPRISE FROM SCENE 37:

TURLOUGH:

We're trapped... between the monsters and the edge of the world!

DISTORTED ROARS OF BLACK SNOWBEASTS.

CONTINUES INTO:

SCENE 39: EXT. ICE PLAIN [CONTINUOUS]

INGER:

They are upon us!

TURLOUGH:

(CROUCHING) Do you think it'll hurt?

BLACK SNOWBEASTS ROAR CLOSER THEN PASS THEM AND LEAP INTO ENERGY WATERFALL.

INGER:

(SURPRISED) No... No, I do not think it will!

TURLOUGH:

(GETTING UP) What are they doing?

INGER:

They're ignoring us... running over the edge of the ice.

HUGE SHIMMERING, SCRAPING, SHIFTING AS THE BARRIER CHANGES.

TURLOUGH:

And being absorbed back into the energy field..

SCENE 40: **INT. LOWER CHAMBER**

CHILDREN FUSS IN B/G.

KARLINA:

Doctor. We have been granted some time, have we not? By this... recalibration of yours?

DOCTOR:

I do hope so, your majesty.

KARLINA:

Good. — Romy, take these children to our kitchens. Feed them. When they are fed, they will be returned to their families.

NYSSA:

We'll help you. Come on, Tegan.

TEGAN:

Me-? (SIGH) All right. Come along, you little tykes.

NYSSA AND TEGAN HELP ROMY GATHER CHILDREN.

DOCTOR:

Good job, Tegan. But Nyssa, I'll need your help very soon.

KARLINA:

Romy, afterwards you will arrange an escort for Lady Nyssa to the Balancing Chamber.

ROMY:

Yes, highness. Thank you highness.

TEGAN, NYSSA AND ROMY TAKE CHILDREN OUT.

KARLINA:

The lady Nyssa will join us once the children are settled.

DOCTOR:

Good. Nyssa has rather a knack with logical systems. (BEAT)
Now, we should get back to Skarsgard.

SCENE 41: **EXT. ICE PLAIN**

SHIMMERING, SCRAPING, SHIFTING AS THE BARRIER CHANGES CONTINUES.

INGER:

What's happening, Sir Turlough? Now the sky is changing colour!

TURLOUGH:

We're not getting any answers here. We should go back to your palace.

THEY HURRY ACROSS THE ICE, AWAY FROM ENERGY WATERFALL.

INGER:

(RUNNING) Yes... go back, and tell my mother what we have seen.

TURLOUGH:

(RUNNING) And the Doctor. I don't know about you, but I've had quite enough of the end of the world.

SCENE 42: INT. PALACE KITCHENS

RATTLING PLATES AND CUPS, BABIES FEEDING AND CHILDREN EATING THROUGH.

ROMY:

(FEEDING BABY WITH BOTTLE) They have not been fed so well in quite some time. We took what we could, but it was never enough.

NYSSA:

Do you need a hand with that bottle, Tegan?

TEGAN:

(STRUGGLING TO FEED BABY WITH BOTTLE) It'd be easier if the little beggar stopped wriggling.

NYSSA:

Here. Let me show you-

TEGAN:

I can do it! It's easy for you, you've had the practice. (BREAKS OFF, BEAT) Sorry, Nyssa. Opened my mouth without thinking..

NYSSA:

It's all right.

TEGAN:

I'm a rubbish friend and a rubbish babysitter.

NYSSA:

No, Tegan. Look. He's settled now. (BEAT) It would have been wonderful to have you around.

TEGAN:

These kids... They should be with their families.

NYSSA:

But we know what their families would have had to do. Make a sacrifice for any new arrival.

ROMY:

It is how it has always been.

TEGAN:

I can't believe it. If you know that's what happens... why would anyone ever have children?

NYSSA:

Some things can't be controlled. And once you become a parent, there's nothing you wouldn't do to keep them safe.

ROMY:

But still, it is so very hard. Especially if you've no-one to depend on. To balance with. That is the case for these poor mites.

NYSSA:

But you think here in the palace they're protected? Shielded somehow?

ROMY:

The royal house has always had special privilege, beyond wealth and rank. We do not believe the Balancing casts quite so harsh an eye on this palace.

TEGAN:

You mean the royals don't pay the same price as everyone else? That figures.

ROMY:

They do follow the rules of succession. Queen Karlina has her own sadness to bear. I cannot deny that. But the black snow never falls anywhere near here.

NYSSA:

Black snow?

ROMY:

It is how Isenfel takes its payment if we do not balance our own accounts. The black snow falls and destroys all it touches.

TEGAN:

This place gets madder by the second.

GUARD ENTERS.

GUARD:

Madam Romy. We were summoned.

ROMY:

Lady Nyssa. Your escort.

NYSSA:

(GOING TO DOOR) I need to go to the Doctor. He said he wanted my help. And we still need to work out how to get away from here...

TEGAN:

Go on. I'll give Romy a hand getting this lot back down to the village.

NYSSA:

Be careful, Tegan.

TEGAN:

You too. I'll be back as soon as I can.

NYSSA:

(DEPARTING) And you could ask about getting the TARDIS out of the ice!

NYSSA EXITS ALONG CORRIDOR.

TEGAN:

Of course! I'd almost forgotten.

ROMY:

You think he will save us, this Doctor of yours?

TEGAN:

That's what he does. Really, he just can't help himself.

SCENE 43: INT. BALANCING CHAMBER

TINKLING MACHINERY B/G IN INNER CHAMBER AS DOCTOR AND KARLINA GUIDE SKARSGARD OUT.

SKARSGARD:

(ROBOTIC FX) Isenfel be constant... Isenfel be constant.

DOCTOR:

(LEADING SKARSGARD FROM INNER CHAMBER) That's it, Karlina. Help me guide him out.

KARLINA:

(HELPING DOCTOR) Skarsgard will recover himself... outside the inner sanctum?

DOCTOR:

That's what I'm assuming. If we remove him from the core environment, his programming should revert...

SKARSGARD:

(GASPING – SUDDENLY HIMSELF AGAIN) My Queen... My Queen... I am sorry... so very sorry. You... your family have been deceived all this time. I am not what you thought me to be...

KARLINA:

You have nothing to apologise for, Balancer Skarsgard. You are still the same man.

SKARSGARD:

But I am not a man. I am no subject of yours my lady.

KARLINA:

You are. You are my family's oldest and truest friend.

DOCTOR:

You realise what you've been doing? Culling your subjects. Under orders from the people who put these controls in place. But from what I can tell, they're long gone.

SKARSGARD:

I have ordered the deaths of... so many... over generations. It has all been my doing.

DOCTOR:

I suppose, in a way, you've kept this place going. If life had run riot, everything inside the atmosphere bubble would have just been wiped out.

KARLINA:

We obey because that is how our lives have always been here. Listen, Skarsgard. There's nothing else we could have done.

DOCTOR:

That's the trouble when you're trapped inside a system. You can't see any other way..

ICE DOOR OPENS.

DOCTOR:

Ah, Nyssa!

NYSSA:

Doctor. You wanted my help?

DOCTOR:

Yes. (LEADING NYSSA TO INNER CHAMBER) Excuse us a moment, Karlina. I'll be right back.

CONTINUES INTO:

SCENE 44: INT. INNER BALANCING CHAMBER (CONTINUOUS)

HOLOGRAPHIC CONTROLS HUM B/G. NYSSA AND DOCTOR ENTER.

DOCTOR:

(LEADING NYSSA TO CONTROLS) I need you to... check my working, as it were.

NYSSA:

Me, Doctor? What can I do?

DOCTOR:

(USING CONTROLS) Here. It's all quite logical. Isenfel is an experimental environment. Artificial atmosphere, simulated night and day, locked inside a sealed force-field.

NYSSA:

I see. This is the map you were talking about.

HOLOGRAPHIC MAP ACTIVATES

DOCTOR:

You weren't wrong when you guessed the locals had a limited gene pool. These people are lab rats. Only the laboratory's been abandoned, and the experiment left running.

NYSSA:

And what was this... experiment testing?

DOCTOR:

I'm not sure. Energy monitoring and conservation? It's a closed system with automatic controls in place to keep things constant. To maintain this 'Equilibrium' that everyone believes in.

NYSSA:

(USING CONTROLS) I see. You've started a recalibration.

DOCTOR:

I think I've set the system to stabilise, to allow for everything as it currently stands. Then I can work out how to switch it off. Just... look things over and tell me if you agree I'm on the right track.

NYSSA:

And what about the TARDIS?

DOCTOR:

Ah. (DEMONSTRATING CONTROLS) This is an energy monitor. Now, what do you think is the biggest source of untapped energy in this kingdom?

NYSSA:

Of course!

DOCTOR:

Only the system doesn't recognise it. I thought you might try adjusting the scanners. Carefully.

NYSSA:

And what will you be doing in the meantime?

DOCTOR:

Talking to Skarsgard. He's had a shock.

NYSSA:

What about Solus, and the interface stabiliser?

DOCTOR:

(GOES TO DOORWAY) I've not forgotten. – So. You're happy with what you've got to do?

NYSSA:

Not 'happy' exactly... But I'll try.

DOCTOR:

I know that feeling well. (BEAT) Am I making things better? I don't know, Nyssa. I just don't know.

NYSSA:

You're changing things. Surely that's better than how it was?

DOCTOR:

Let's hope so. (EXITING)

SCENE 45: **EXT. ICE PATH — ON CART**

TEGAN AND ROMY IN HORSE-DRAWN CART. JESPER DRIVING IT ALONG ICE PATH THROUGHOUT. CHILD COUGHS AND CRIES.

TEGAN:

Uh-oh. I've got one being sick back here!

JESPER:

(CALLING FROM DRIVER'S SEAT) We fed them too well, I think!

ROMY:

Here. (HANDING TEGAN CLOTHS) It is not much further. We ride through the pass and the village is beyond.

TEGAN:

(MOPPING UP) I don't suppose you've a change of clothes at your place? For me I mean.

JESPER:

Nothing like these strange garments you wear now!

TEGAN:

It'd be good to get out of these overalls. Let me guess. I can have anything so long as it's white fur?

ROMY:

The new day is dawning. By the time it is light, the children will be back with their families.

TEGAN:

They all handed them over to you willingly?

JESPER:

It had to be done quickly before the Balancer was alerted.

TEGAN:

But still, they must trust you both.

ROMY:

Jesper has been a village elder for many years. And the Princess's tracker for longer. He is respected.

JESPER:

Hush, woman. You are well-loved by the people. Romy's work in the palace kitchens meant we both had access.

TEGAN:

And you kept them there. For years. Right under the Balancer's nose.

JESPER:

We get help from those we trust, but it gets harder. I do not know what we would have done as they grew older.

ROMY:

We may not have seen that future. I almost didn't see this dawn.

TEGAN:

Yes. I'm sorry. We've brought you a whole load of trouble.

ROMY:

No, you bring something else.

JESPER:

Something new. Change.

TEGAN:

I just hope it's change for the better.

BABY CRIES.

TEGAN:

Talking of change. (SNIFFS) Anyone got any nappies?

ROMY:

I shall attend to it.

TEGAN:

Hey. Am I imagining it, or does the sky look a funny colour?

SCENE 46: INT. BALANCING CHAMBER

HUM B/G IN INNER CHAMBER AS DOCTOR EMERGES

DOCTOR:

Queen Karlina. How is your Balancer?

KARLINA:

He went to his quarters.

DOCTOR:

Really, I'd rather we kept him close at hand...

KARLINA:

Skarsgard needs time to recover himself. I do not fully understand all you have shown us. But his whole life has been torn apart.

DOCTOR:

Of course. It's a lot to take in.

KARLINA:

And I have no idea what I should be doing..

DOCTOR:

There is something, which may be a welcome distraction.

KARLINA:

Yes?

DOCTOR:

My craft. It slipped beneath the ice when we arrived.

KARLINA:

Beneath the ice? Anything that falls to Isenfel stays on the surface until the black snow takes it.

DOCTOR:

Luckily for me, my ship was losing power into the vortex. If it had been the other way around, well, I imagine there'd have been quite a flurry of your black snow.

KARLINA:

Losing power?

DOCTOR:

But it should have stabilised. It's down there somewhere. Nyssa is finding out exactly where.

KARLINA:

I will have my people assist. We have tools we can use to cut the ice.

DOCTOR:

Thank you. And I've something else to find too. Something Solus had with him. Perhaps it was left in his shipwreck?

SKARSGARD:

(AT DOORWAY) That wreck is gone.

DOCTOR:

Skarsgard.

KARLINA:

Lord Balancer. Are you rested?

SKARSGARD:

(ENTERING) No, my lady. I don't believe I will ever rest again.

DOCTOR:

I realise this must be a difficult time, but it's vitally important I recover an item that Solus had with him.

SKARSGARD:

His vessel is destroyed. Lost to the black snow. But I believe I know the object you seek...

DOCTOR:

Then please, will you-

SKARSGARD:

(INTERRUPTING) No! First, you will explain to me. Doctor. You who fell to our world with all the answers. First you will tell me... what I am!

SCENE 47: **EXT. ICE PLAIN**

WATERFALL OF DISTORTION, DISTANT. TURLOUGH AND INGER WALKING OVER ICE THROUGH.

TURLOUGH:

So that's how things are run here. It's rather like a great big petri dish.

INGER:

All in Isenfel must be willing to make the sacrifice.

TURLOUGH:

It certainly brings families closer. (SOTTO) A lot closer than mine at any rate.

INGER:

You think so? I never knew my grandfather. He had to die so I could live. That was his gift to me, and I will not waste it.

TURLOUGH:

(STOPPING) Do you think we can rest? There's been no sign of those beasts. Black or white. And look. It's getting lighter.

INGER:

(STOPPING) I know... But I have never seen a dawn like this one.

TURLOUGH:

I don't know what to expect next in this place..

INGER:

Remember, at the edge of the world? The colour changed. It has given the sky a sickly hue.

WATERFALL OF DISTORTION INCREASES IN PITCH, COMES SLOWLY CLOSER.

INGER:

Get up, Sir Turlough. We cannot rest.

TURLOUGH:

Please. Just a few minutes-

INGER:

No. Not even one. It is still a long way to the palace. And we have no time to spare. Do you not feel it?

TURLOUGH:

Feel what?

INGER:

The edge of our kingdom is coming closer.

TURLOUGH:

The edge of-? (BREAKS OFF, REALISING) Of course... It's an energy barrier... The TARDIS crossed it to land. That's what's surrounding this place...

CRACKLING DISTORTION OVERHEAD.

INGER:

Listen. And look. Lightning that sparks across the sky, never coming to ground. This too is something I have never seen.

TURLOUGH:

It could be shorting out. And if the whole energy barrier's contracting...

INGER:

That is what I said. The end of our world is coming closer.

TURLOUGH:

(SETTING OFF) You've convinced me. Come on, we need to move.

SCENE 48: **EXT. VILLAGE**

TEGAN, ROMY AND JESPER WALKING OVER SNOW. A CHILD HAPPILY RUNS TO ITS PARENTS.

TEGAN:

That's it. Everyone from your nursery, reunited with their folks. Happy families.

JESPER:

But for how long?

ROMY:

We were fools to think we could change anything. That we could go against the Balancing.

TEGAN:

The Doctor will think of something. I'm sure he will.

JESPER:

We cannot fight the rules of Isenfel. Perhaps we have lived too long already, Romy. Perhaps we should have just made way.

TEGAN:

You don't have any kids yourselves?

ROMY:

No. We were never blessed.

JESPER:

Or cursed. Since if we had, then one of us...

TEGAN:

Yeah. Right. I don't know how you can live like this.

JESPER:

It is all we know.

ROMY:

There is no other way. We live with the certainty of death.

TEGAN:

But doesn't that make you want to fight back?

JESPER:

It did. But look what happened.

ROMY:

We tried. But now we know there is no other way. The Balancing is as constant as the ice beneath our feet. (RESIGNED) Isenfel be constant.

JESPER:

(RESIGNED) Isenfel be constant. Follow, Lady Tegan. I shall return you to the palace.

TEGAN:

Thanks. Goodbye Romy. I hope we can- (INTERRUPTED)

CRIES OF VILLAGERS, OFF. DISTORTED STATIC OF BLACK SNOW IN DISTANCE.

TEGAN:

What is it?

ROMY:

Black snow.

SCENE 49: **EXT. ICE GARDEN**

PEOPLE WALKING OVER ICE, SCRAPING AND CUTTING INTO ICE.

NYSSA:

Thank you for your assistance, your majesty.

KARLINA:

The Doctor and Skarsgard have things to discuss. They are best left alone.

NYSSA:

I agree. I wasn't entirely sure what those systems were telling me, but there was definitely something here.

KARLINA:

Just outside my palace walls. In our ice gardens.

NYSSA:

The sculptures are incredible in their detail.

KARLINA:

We were so very proud of our craftsmen. But now, all this art means so... little.

NYSSA:

On the contrary, your highness. I can tell everything in Isenfel has meaning to you. The palace itself is a magnificent structure. Elegant in its simplicity. And so very beautiful.

KARLINA:

You have a regal bearing, Lady Nyssa. Unlike your friends. Am I right in thinking you are from noble stock?

NYSSA:

It's a very long time ago now. I've come to learn it doesn't really matter who your parents are. It's what they teach you.

KARLINA:

You are wise beyond your years. You and the Doctor, you have the eyes of older souls.

NYSSA:

I'm a lot older than I look. The Doctor too. (ASIDE) I'm starting to realise how he sometimes feels. (TO KARLINA) I've been travelling for a long time... But I'm ready to stop. That's where we differ.

KARLINA:

You believe in him. As I believed in Skarsgard..

NYSSA:

I do. The Doctor is a good man. He will always try and make a difference.

SHOUTS OFF.

PEOPLE:

Here! I see it!

KARLINA:

My hunters have found something.

NYSSA:

The energy locator was right. I didn't believe it at first. We arrived much further out. Beyond those ice-ridges.

KARLINA:

My palace has always been at the centre of things. People and things are drawn to it.

NYSSA:

Maybe that's it. While the TARDIS was losing energy, Isenfel's control systems pulled it in towards the palace so they could work out what it was.

KARLINA:

If this machine can do all you claim, then it may prove useful.

NYSSA:

Oh yes. The TARDIS can be very useful indeed.

SCENE 50: INT. INNER BALANCING CHAMBER

TINKLING HOLOGRAPHIC SYSTEMS HUM B/G

DOCTOR:

(ENTERING) Follow me. Please. It shouldn't be such a shock this time.

SKARSGARD:

(OUTSIDE) I... I will not lose myself?

DOCTOR:

No. You won't. You're part of it, Skarsgard. An artificial construct linked to this control system.

SKARSGARD:

Artificial?

DOCTOR:

You're an incredibly complex machine.

SKARSGARD:

I am not... alive?

DOCTOR:

Not strictly speaking, no. But then again. What's life, if not an incredibly complex machine?

SKARSGARD:

Then... I shall enter. (ROBOTIC FX AS HE ENTERS ROOM) Isenfel be constant.

DOCTOR:

You're doing well, Skarsgard. I think the system reset has run its course.

SKARSGARD:

(FX) System recalibrated. Diagnostics running. (BEAT) I... see... all of Isenfel, through my mind.

DOCTOR:

(USING CONTROLS) That's right. Now, I want to dig a little deeper into the core programming. (BEAT) I'm afraid this may hurt.

SKARSGARD:

(FX) If I am a machine, how do I feel pain?

DOCTOR:

Your neural circuits will experience a huge surge of power. Think of your heart as a perpetual motion machine. It's meant to keep you running for thousands of years.

SKARSGARD:

(FX) I have... excess energy? How does this not disturb the balance?

DOCTOR:

You're the monitor. You're outside the parameters of the system. I need to give your workings a jolt to see them clearly.

SKARSGARD:

(FX) This 'jolt' will... cause pain?

DOCTOR:

I'm afraid so, yes. I have to access the shell program. There's something behind it. A message.

SKARSGARD:

(FX) Do it, Doctor. Discover the truth.

DOCTOR:

All right. And I'm really very sorry... (ACTIVATES CONTROLS)

SKARSGARD:

(FX) CRIES OUT IN PAIN

SCENE 51: **EXT. VILLAGE**

VILLAGERS PANICKING. CRYING IN FEAR. RUNNING OVER ICE. STATIC DISTORT OF BLACK SNOW BLIZZARD.

VILLAGERS:

(B/G PANIC) Help! Save us! We are lost!

JESPER:

I've never seen the black snow fall so thick.

TEGAN:

It's like it's deliberately attacking the village.

ROMY:

It has come for us. We have brought this on ourselves...

TEGAN:

Can't we get inside? Under cover!

JESPER:

There's nowhere to go. It's all around. The huts will dissolve like everything else!

TEGAN:

Everything...? (REMEMBERING) But not the palace! We need to get everyone back up to the palace.

ROMY:

The children. This is happening because we brought the children outside...

JESPER:

No, this storm is bigger than any I've seen before. Those few small lives cannot be the cause.

TEGAN:

I thought the Doctor reset everything. That it would all get... balanced out.

ROMY:

Even your Doctor cannot fight the constancy of Isenfel.

JESPER:

Load the carts. Lady Tegan is right. (CALLING) Everyone. Run, ride, flee! Go back through the mountain pass. Do not stop. We must rely on the mercy of our queen.

PEOPLE START TO RUSH TO DEPART.

ROMY:

Our village... Our lives. They are being laid waste. (BEAT) We have caused this. It is all my fault.

JESPER:

Romy! No!

ROMY:

(WALKING AWAY) Even one life can make a difference!

TEGAN:

What are you doing? Don't walk towards it!

JESPER:

Romy, Please! Don't leave me...

ROMY:

(CALLING) I love you Jesper. But you live for both of us now... Aaargh! (SCREAMS AS SHE DISSOLVES IN STATIC DISTORT)

JESPER:

Romy! (SOBS) Stupid... stupid woman. How can I live without you?

TEGAN:

She's gone, Jesper. I'm sorry. She's gone. (BEAT) The blizzard's stopped moving. She's given everyone a chance.

JESPER:

I will follow her into the storm. That's what I must do.

TEGAN GRABS HIM.

TEGAN:

No you won't. You'll fight. And right now you're going to get me a horse.

JESPER:

A horse?

SCENE 52: **EXT. ICE PLAIN**

CRACKLING DISTORTION IN THE SKY, A DISTANT WATERFALL OF DISTORTION CLOSES IN.

INGER:

(STOPPING) Stop... a moment...

TURLOUGH:

(STOPPING) Let's catch our breath.

INGER:

Look. The edge of our world is following us.

TURLOUGH:

I don't think it's personal. You can see it moving now. Something must have happened to make it start closing in.

INGER:

We always live with the certainty of death. If our time is over, if our world decides we are finished, then perhaps-

TURLOUGH:

What happened to not wasting what your grandfather gave you?

INGER:

Isenfel may deem that debt repaid. The Balancing decides, not I.

TURLOUGH:

Well, I'm not giving up quite so easily.

INGER:

Here in Isenfel, we accept the inevitable.

TURLOUGH:

Well, I'm not from Isenfel, and death is something I plan to put off for as long as possible. Come on!

THEY SET OFF RUNNING AGAIN.

SCENE 53: INT. INNER BALANCING CHAMBER

TINKLING AND HUMMING CONTROLS SYSTEMS ACTIVATING.

DOCTOR:

That's it. I've got something. A record file. Skarsgard – how do I get this to play...?

SKARSGARD:

(ROBOTIC FX) Activate.

SCREEN ACTIVATES.

VIKTOR:

(ECHOY RECORDING PLAYBACK ON-SCREEN, DISTORTED, BROKEN, SKIPPING) Isenfel Experimental environment – (HISS) – closed system simulation – (HISS) – to allow energy venting within parameters – (HISS) – create internal entropy fields – (SKIPPING) – in case of emergency, the life-forms can adapt to remove excess – (HISS)

DOCTOR:

A recording. Of course. Any good scientist makes notes. But this is very old... it's been corrupted.

VIKTOR:

(D) – the record of Experimenter Viktor Skarsgard.

DOCTOR:

See, Balancer? You're modelled on the original experimenter. You did have the voice of God after all.

VIKTOR:

(D, PLAYBACK STABILISES) We have created this system and seeded it with life to investigate our theory. Our universe is collapsing. And the rate of decay is much quicker than anticipated. By simulating this collapse we can discover more about the eventual fate of our universe.

DOCTOR:

Now we're getting somewhere.

FAST-FORWARDING OF RECORDING.

VIKTOR:

(D) Record nine zero three. The experiment is over. We have turned our attention instead to means of escape. We believe there may be a passage to external universes... Isenfel has been a glorious failure.

EXTENDED 'END-OF-MESSAGE' BEEP.

SKARSGARD:

(FX) System wipe.

DOCTOR:

What? (AT CONTROLS, DISMAYED) No. Why are you doing that?

SKARSGARD:

(FX) Entropy protocols engaged. All energy venting. Isenfel experimental environment, shutting down.

DOCTOR:

Oh no.

SCENE 54: **EXT. VILLAGE ROAD**

BLACK SNOW DISTORT B/G. VILLAGERS MOVING OUT ALONG ICE-PATH WITH CARTS, HORSES.

TEGAN:

(LEADING HORSE) Right. Give me a leg up, Jesper.

JESPER:

Lars says this stallion is good-tempered. It should serve you well. (HELPING TEGAN MOUNT) You are sure, Lady Tegan?

TEGAN:

(SETTLING HERSELF ON SADDLE) I'm sure all right. Romy bought us some time. You need to get your people away, and I need to find my friend. He's lost out there somewhere.

JESPER:

You don't know where.

TEGAN:

I can follow tracks in the snow. The hunt left enough of a trail. No-one else was heading their way last night.

JESPER:

If you cannot be turned from this..

TEGAN:

No. I can't. (BEAT) Thanks Jesper. I know it's hard losing Romy like that. But we've got to look after the ones still here. You can mourn her later.

JESPER:

You are right, Lady Tegan. Go, and may Isenfel grant you the time.

TEGAN:

Good luck to you too! Yah! (SPURS HORSE ON)

TEGAN GALLOPS OFF.

JESPER:

(TO SELF) I am sick of death's victories this night. I will not see it win another.

JESPER RUNS TOWARDS OTHERS.

JESPER:

(CALLING) Lars! Fetch me a horse!

SCENE 55: **EXT. ICE PLAIN**

INGER AND TURLOUGH RUNNING. A WATERFALL OF DISTORTION FOLLOWS THEM

INGER:

The palace... I see the palace at last.

TURLOUGH:

Good. Because I'd swear that barrier is moving faster.

INGER:

And look. It is not just closing in. See what is spilling from it.

TURLOUGH:

Oh no, our black furry friends are back. In force.

MANY BLACK SNOWBEASTS ROARING AND SNARLING IN DISTANCE.

INGER:

Come on!

SCENE 56: INT. INNER BALANCING CHAMBER

HOLOGRAPHIC SYSTEMS AND ALARMS TINKLING AND HUMMING, BUILDING THROUGH IN B/G.

DOCTOR:

(SHAKING SKARSGARD) Come on... Skarsgard! Speak to me!

DOCTOR DASHES TO CONTROL BANKS. NYSSA RUNS IN.

NYSSA:

(CALLING) Doctor! We've found the TARDIS! It got dragged in towards central control. They're digging for it in the palace garden!

DOCTOR:

(DISTRACTED, HITTING CONTROLS) Good... good. Though that's rather like finding a deflated lifejacket on the Titanic...

NYSSA:

What's wrong? What's happened to the Balancer?

DOCTOR:

He's stopped responding. (CROSSING TO OTHER CONTROLS) And Isenfel's bubble is shrinking.

NYSSA:

The energy transduction barrier, you mean? I thought you'd stabilised everything.

DOCTOR:

(RUNNING TO ANOTHER CONTROL BANK) So did I. But it seems all I managed to do was stave off the inevitable. What was I thinking? You can't make a bargain with entropy. Every system will always tend towards collapse.

NYSSA:

Can't you try recalibrating again?

DOCTOR:

It seems any process within the experiment can be run once and once only.

NYSSA:

What do you mean?

DOCTOR:

Isenfel is an artificial environment created to simulate the collapse of E-Space. I've triggered the shut-down. And now I can't stop it.

NYSSA:

There's nothing you can do?

DOCTOR:

(USING CONTROLS) Not any more. The closed system is disintegrating, venting its energy out into the rest of this universe.

NYSSA:

There must be something!

DOCTOR:

I've already done too much. Don't you see Nyssa? I thought I was saving the people of Isenfel. Instead, I've condemned them all to die!

END OF PART THREE

PART FOUR

(NO REPRISE)

SCENE 57: EXT. ICE PLAIN

B/G DISTANT FIZZING DISTORTION OF ENERGY BARRIER SHRINKING.
TURLOUGH AND INGER CLIMB OVER RIDGE

INGER:

(STOPPING, CALLING BACK) Nearly there, Sir Turlough! Over this ridge and the palace is below us.

TURLOUGH:

(CATCHING UP) There's the mountain pass. The way we set off. We've come round in a circle. Hold on... Look at all the people.

INGER:

They're marching on the palace! – What is this? Revolution?

TURLOUGH:

No. I think they're saving themselves. Look what's behind them.

INGER:

Black snowstorms, sweeping over the ice-plains.

TURLOUGH:

While we've got black snowbeasts and the edge of the world after us. We need to warn them what else is coming.

THEY START SLIPPING AND SLIDING DOWN RIDGE.

SCENE 58: INT. INNER BALANCING CHAMBER

TINKLING MACHINERY WHIRRING OUT OF CONTROL. DOCTOR RUSHES BETWEEN CONTROL PANELS TRYING TO STOP THE PROCESS.

DOCTOR:

It's no use, Nyssa. The forces keep changing. I'm trying to secure the integrity of the atmosphere bubble, but it's impossible to find a balance!

NYSSA:

Can't you reverse what you've done, put the system back to how it was?

DOCTOR:

I can't do anything, Nyssa! Reverse it, accelerate it, switch it off! All the protocols are locked.

NYSSA:

Doctor. The TARDIS.

DOCTOR:

What about it?

NYSSA:

Queen Karlina's people will have it out of the ice soon.

DOCTOR:

We can't just leave! Even if we wanted to, the [stabiliser]-

NYSSA:

(INTERRUPTING) But we could shelter! There's nothing more we can do here. Is there?

THE DOCTOR GOES TO LIFT SKARSGARD.

DOCTOR:

Help me with Skarsgard. We still need to find that interface stabiliser. (EFFORT – LIFTING SKARSGARD)

NYSSA:

(HELPING LIFT SKARSGARD) You think he knows something?

DOCTOR AND NYSSA CARRY SKARSGARD TOWARDS OUTER CHAMBER.

SKARSGARD:

(FX) Isenfel be constant. Isenfel be constant.

DOCTOR:

(WITH EFFORT) Carry him into the outer chamber, we might get him talking again.

NYSSA:

(CARRYING SKARSGARD THROUGH) I hope we can. The TARDIS is useless without that component.

FOLLOW THEM TO OUTER CHAMBER.

DOCTOR:

Here will do. (THEY SET SKARSGARD DOWN) We just have to hope that his neural centres haven't completely burnt out.

NYSSA:

Do you think you could repair them?

DOCTOR:

Given time... perhaps. But I'd say this entire realm is more likely to be obliterated first.

SKARSGARD:

(MUTTERING) Isenfel... be constant.

SCENE 59: **EXT. ICE PLAIN**

TEGAN'S HORSE TROTting ALONG. JESPER'S HORSE GALLOPS FROM DISTANCE.

JESPER:
(CALLING) Lady Tegan!

JESPER CATCHES UP AND SLOWS. EDGE OF WORLD ENERGY BARRIER FIZZES IN DISTANCE.

TEGAN:
You followed me.

JESPER:
I could not face another death on my conscience.

TEGAN:
It was my decision. You didn't have to come after me, you know.

JESPER:
When your world falls apart, you need something to cling to.

TEGAN:
You didn't have to... But I'm glad you did. (BEAT) I'm sorry about Romy. I could see you loved each other very much.

JESPER:
We did. And I will honour her memory by doing what I can to help you. And your friends.

TEGAN:
Right... I followed the hunting party's tracks... but look. They seem to lead straight towards that wall of... whatever it is.

JESPER:
The world's end.

TEGAN:
Is that what you call it? It looks like some kind of force field?

JESPER:
No. It truly is the end of our world. The edge of everything. But it is closer than I have ever seen it before. I fear your friend, and the Princess, may have passed over to the other side.

TEGAN:
Turlough can't be gone.

JESPER:

(RECONSIDERING) But, the edge is moving... (REALISATION) The ground has vanished where they passed!

TEGAN:

The one thing you need to know about Turlough is, he's very good at looking after his own sorry hide. He'll have found another way back.

JESPER:

Then we need to find where their tracks re-appear.

CRACKS OF THUNDER. SPARKS CRACKLING ACROSS THE SKY.

TEGAN:

What was that? Lightning?

JESPER:

Never mind the skies, Lady Tegan. Look what else is at the edge. Where the blackness melts the ice away.

DISTORTED, SNARLING GROWLING, OFF.

TEGAN:

Are they... snowbeasts? Coming out of that barrier?

JESPER:

Aye. But of a kind I've not seen before.

TEGAN:

They're... black.

JESPER:

Come on. We should get to high ground. We shall see more from there. Yah!

JESPER SPURS HIS HORSE ON. TEGAN FOLLOWS.

SCENE 60: **EXT. ICE GARDEN**

WINCH TURNING IN B/G – CLATTERING, ROPE TURNING ETC. INGER & TURLOUGH ARRIVE.

PEOPLE:

Heave! / And again! / Heave! [ETC]

TURLOUGH:

What's going on here? What's with the winch?

INGER:

They're pulling something out of a hole in the ice garden. Look, a blue box!

KARLINA:

(OFF) My daughter!

INGER:

(HURRYING OVER ICE) Mother!

FOLLOW AS SHE RUNS AND EMBRACES KARLINA.

KARLINA:

It does my heart good to see you safe. I would not want the end to come without you.

TURLOUGH:

(ARRIVING) Your majesty. I see you found the TARDIS. The blue box?

KARLINA:

TARDIS, yes. That is what the Doctor called it.

TURLOUGH:

Where is he now, your majesty?

KARLINA:

Inside the palace with our Lord Balancer and your friend. He seeks to divine the mysteries of Isenfel, but they perplex him.

TURLOUGH:

Well if he doesn't know what's going on, we haven't a hope.

INGER:

The edge of the world is moving, mother. It is like the walls of our kingdom are closing in.

KARLINA:

And the black snow is ravaging the lands beyond the ice-mountain. I have allowed the villagers to take shelter in the palace.

INGER:

So this is what we do as the world ends? We run? We hide?

TURLOUGH:

I can heartily recommend it as a method of self-preservation. At least until a better option comes along.

KARLINA:

And can you offer any better option, Sir Turlough? You and your friends?

TURLOUGH:

There is the TARDIS. If there really is no hope, it could get us away from here.

INGER:

I do not see how you four can fit inside it, let alone all of Isenfel!

TURLOUGH:

No. And at the moment, it's probably out of the question. It was damaged, you see.

INGER:

That blue box could take us to safety?

TURLOUGH:

When it's working properly, the TARDIS can take you anywhere you like.

SCENE 61: INT. BALANCING CHAMBER

TINKLING HUMMING B/G IN INNER CHAMBER, OFF

DOCTOR:

(TRYING TO WAKE SKARSGARD) Skarsgard's still not responding. He's completely unconscious.

NYSSA:

Perhaps the shutdown has affected him already?

DOCTOR:

(GETTING UP, PACING) It's no good, Nyssa. I've only made things worse. Now I have to go and tell those people their world is ending, and it's all my fault!

NYSSA:

You didn't start this experiment, Doctor. You didn't imprison these people. You can't shoulder the blame for everything.

DOCTOR:

But I can for some things. (BEAT) You know that better than most, Nyssa.

NYSSA:

There was nothing we could do about Adric. Either Adric.

DOCTOR:

You've lost everything because of me.

NYSSA:

No, Doctor. You helped me carry on despite losing everything.

DOCTOR:

That's very noble of you to say, Nyssa.

NYSSA:

You have no idea, do you? The effect you have? You upset the balance for the best. There's no equilibrium with you. You'll always tip the scales in everyone's favour but your own.

DOCTOR:

It just doesn't feel that way at the moment.

NYSSA:

You do realise that in the long term, this universe is collapsing at a far faster rate than our own.

DOCTOR:

Yes. E-Space is doomed. But then, in the even longer term, so's N-Space. And that doesn't stop me trying, does it? (WALKING TO INNER CHAMBER) Ask the Queen to meet me in her hall.

NYSSA:

(GOING TO DOOR) You'll think of something, Doctor. You always do.

DOCTOR:

(AT INNER DOORWAY) You know, I could try and improvise something from these components. Some kind of dimensional regulator... It may be compatible.

NYSSA:

There. I knew you weren't beaten!

DOCTOR:

Thank you, Nyssa. If there's anything I can do for these people, then I'll do it.

SCENE 62: **EXT. ICE PLAIN**

TEGAN AND JESPER RIDING TO HIGHER GROUND. DISTORTION AND CRACKLING OF BARRIER.

JESPER:

Hold here, Lady Tegan, at the top of the ridge! (THEY STOP.) I see every horizon. The kingdom is so small now...

TEGAN:

It's like being inside a snow-globe. Only the glass is shrinking.

JESPER:

I do not think there is anyone else out on the ice-plains. We should go back to the palace.

DISTORTED GROWLS OF BLACK SNOWBEASTS BELOW. LOUDER CRACKLING IN SKY.

TEGAN:

I think Rover and his friends might have something to say about that.

JESPER:

I have arrows. They are not attacking yet. Perhaps we could make our way through if I first clear a path.

LOUDER CRACKLES AS BARRIER IS BREACHED BY PIRATE SHIP CUTTING FROM OUTSIDE.

JESPER:

The skies are angry too.

CRACKLES CONTINUE, EXPLOSION ABOVE.

TEGAN:

Hang on... That's not just lightning. There's something coming through the barrier!

BLACK SNOWBEASTS DISTORTED HOWLS LOUDER, START TO APPROACH.

JESPER:

Whatever it is, the black snowbeasts do not like it.

SKY CRACKS OPEN. 'PIRATE SHIP' DESCENDS — FX AS IN *THE ENTROPY PLAGUE*

TEGAN:

I'll tell you what it is... It's a ship!

SCENE 63: **INT. PALACE HALL**

FOOTSTEPS INTO HALL AS NYSSA AND TURLOUGH ENTER.

NYSSA:

Well I'm glad you're all right, Turlough.

TURLOUGH:

I very nearly wasn't. Have you any idea what's going on out there?

NYSSA:

We've some idea, yes. This whole world is an experiment that's shutting itself down. Actually, have you seen-

THEY STOP. INGER CATCHES UP, FOLLOWED BY KARLINA.

INGER:

(INTERRUPTING) Sir Turlough! Tell my mother what you said to me. About the Doctor's ship.

KARLINA:

It does not make any difference, Inger.

TURLOUGH:

Well, I only said that it could travel a long way.

DOCTOR ENTERS FROM CORRIDOR.

INGER:

I mean about it holding vast dimensions inside. Huge spaces you said!

DOCTOR:

Have you been boasting, Turlough?

TURLOUGH:

Doctor!

DOCTOR:

The size doesn't matter. And certainly not at the moment. Good to see you made it back in one piece, all the same. - Thank you, Princess Inger, for looking after Turlough. Even if it has made him a little too eager to give away our secrets.

TURLOUGH:

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to-

DOCTOR:

(INTERRUPTING) It doesn't matter. Because that's what I'm offering.

TURLOUGH:

What?

DOCTOR:

We may not be able to get far without that stabiliser, but the TARDIS can still be a safe haven.

NYSSA:

But what about the dimensional integrity-

DOCTOR:

(HOLDS UP COMPONENT) As the Balancing systems were shutting down, I managed to piece together a regulator from some of the parts.

DOCTOR CLICKS COMPONENT. IT HUMS INTERMITTENTLY

DOCTOR:

It should be compatible with the TARDIS. It will at least hold the internal dimensions together while we investigate... er... alternative solutions.

TURLOUGH:

Will it be safe?

DOCTOR:

Certainly safer than staying out here. Now. Nine thousand five hundred and eighty-two people? Give or take a few extra children. Yes. There'll be plenty of room.

TURLOUGH:

You can't be serious.

KARLINA:

We must consider this carefully.

INGER:

What is to consider, mother? We have to do this. Or die.

KARLINA:

We do not abandon our kingdom. I thought a daughter of the royal house of Isenfel would know that.

INGER:

I know when our kingdom is lost. You didn't see the wall of nothingness that is coming towards us.

DOCTOR:

Nyssa. See how Skarsgard is doing.

NYSSA:

Yes Doctor. (EXITS)

DOCTOR:

You two – Turlough, Inger. Round up the villagers. As soon as the TARDIS is free of the ice I'll install the regulator and we can start loading people on board.

INGER:

Come on Sir Turlough. (EXITS)

TURLOUGH:

I'm still not sure it's a good idea. (FOLLOWING)

KARLINA:

I have not yet given my approval.

DOCTOR:

I think you've had quite enough say over your people's lives already, Karlina.

KARLINA:

I am queen of Isenfel still.

DOCTOR:

Then you don't have a choice, 'your majesty'. Not if you want to have anything left to rule.

KARLINA:

Isenfel is dying.

DOCTOR:

A kingdom consists of its people, not its land. I can simply take them all somewhere else.

KARLINA:

No. I shall think on this. Isenfel has been my life. I cannot abandon it so easily.

DOCTOR:

Don't think for too long. We haven't much time.

SCENE 64: **INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE HALL**

NYSSA WALKING, FOOTSTEPS IN CORRIDOR AHEAD.

NYSSA:

Hello? Is there someone there?

NYSSA CATCHES UP WITH SKARSGARD.

NYSSA:

Balancer Skarsgard. I couldn't find you in the Balancing Chamber. Were you outside the hall all along?

SKARSGARD:

I know these corridors well. Every turn... every hiding place.

NYSSA:

You should have come in. We wanted to ask-

SKARSGARD:

(INTERRUPTS) No. No, I heard all that was said. I have no place there. Not among... people.

NYSSA:

What do you mean? They're your people. Lord Balancer, are you feeling all right?

SKARSGARD:

I do not know. Does a machine feel?

NYSSA:

You're not just a machine. You can learn. In principle, my organic brain is only a sophisticated learning machine.

SKARSGARD:

The Doctor said something similar. (SEARCHING ROBES) I... have something for him. For you all. The metal disc with the red glowing centre. (TAKING COMPONENT FROM ROBES)

STABILISER HUMS AS IN *MISTFALL*

NYSSA:

The interface stabiliser!

SKARSGARD:

(HANDING HER COMPONENT) Here. It will enable your own machine to work?

NYSSA:

Yes. You don't know what this means. We can save everyone!

SKARSGARD:

Good. Good. You and the Doctor do what you can. I will do the same. (WALKS AWAY) I serve Isenfel to the last.

SKARSGARD WALKS OFF ALONG CORRIDOR

NYSSA:

But... you can come too. (CALLING) Balancer Skarsgard! Where are you going?

SCENE 65: INT. BALANCING CHAMBER

TINKLING WHIRRING OF INNER HOLOGRAPHIC SYSTEMS B/G. KARLINA TOYS WITH LOOSE METAL COGS AND WHEELS. WALKS ACROSS CHAMBER, DISCARDING THEM.

KARLINA:

(TO SELF) What would you say, father?

SKARSGARD'S FOOTSTEPS IN CORRIDOR.

KARLINA:

(TO SELF) And you, Gustav. What would you do?

SKARSGARD:

(ENTERING) You have honoured their memories, Karlina. I know they would both be proud.

KARLINA:

Skarsgard. You are recovered?

SKARSGARD:

No. And I do not think I ever shall be.

KARLINA:

I know that feeling all too well. The first time was when my father departed. Again, after my husband.

SKARSGARD:

They did their duty. They faced death with nobility. Princess Inger is a fine woman. She does your father credit.

KARLINA:

And then, there was another time... (BEAT) Erik.

SKARSGARD:

The young prince... It was... The sickness was... (BEAT) Well... we do not know what is planned for us.

KARLINA:

When I lost Erik. When I lost my child... It made me question everything. He left such a hole in the world.

SKARSGARD:

There was space for another life. Among the villagers. A girl, if I remember. I do not quite recall the name. I am losing so much now.

KARLINA:

But in my world, in here, I will always miss him. Yet he will always be with me. An absence and a presence. Is that... equilibrium?

(BEAT OF SILENCE)

SKARSGARD:

If the Balancing taught us anything... the briefer the time we have, the more precious. And I have lived far, far too long.
(BEAT) This is where I end, my lady.

KARLINA:

(SOTTO) Where we all end. (BEAT) The Doctor offers us sanctuary. I cannot take it. But I cannot order my subjects to do the same.

SKARSGARD:

I have been ordering their deaths for... centuries.

KARLINA:

You did not know... We did not know any other way. But now. The veil is lifted. We see what we have done. I cannot rule those whose mothers' and fathers' blood is on my hands.

SKARSGARD:

Ask them. Speak to Inger. I... will remain. Take the Gauge. It may prove useful yet.

SKARSGARD PASSES CLICKING GAUGE TO KARLINA.

KARLINA:

Thank you. (WALKING TO EXIT) You have been my oldest and my truest friend, Skarsgard. I thank you for your service.

SKARSGARD:

The Doctor said my heart was a perpetual machine. But now, I feel it breaking.

KARLINA:

My heart is become ice. It... had to. But that world is past.

SKARSGARD:

I will do what I can here. To give them time. Whatever you decide, remember me, my lady.

KARLINA:

I shall, Lord Balancer. Isenfel be constant.

KARLINA WALKS AWAY.

SKARSGARD:

Isenfel be... constant. (TO SELF) As constant as its queen.

SCENE 66: **EXT. ICE PLAIN**

SHIP LANDING CONCLUDES. BLACK SNOWBEASTS DISTORTED GROWLS APPROACHING.

TEGAN:

Whoever they are, they've landed.

JESPER:

And the black beasts have their scent. This strange ship draws them in. Let me see if arrows will keep them at bay. (FIRES ARROW)

ARROW SIZZLES INTO BLACK SNOWBEASTS, DISTORTED YELPING.

JESPER:

My Lady, we need to move.

TEGAN:

But who are they? What are they doing here?

JESPER:

(FIRING AGAIN) So many visitors... Isenfel will never be constant again.

ARROW SIZZLES INTO BLACK SNOWBEASTS, DISTORTED YELPING.

TEGAN:

We've got to warn them. They need to turn around and go straight back to where they came from!

JESPER:

You cannot go down to that ship. It is too dangerous! (FIRES)

ARROW SIZZLES INTO BLACK SNOWBEASTS, DISTORTED YELPING.

TEGAN:

Not if you keep me covered. The wolfpack is still a way off. (RUNNING OFF) Shan't be a mo, Jesper.

JESPER:

But Lady Tegan! The beasts have seen you. They are coming! (FIRES ANOTHER ARROW AT BEASTS)

JESPER:

(CALLING) And I am running out of arrows!

CROSS TO:

SCENE 67: EXT. OUTSIDE PIRATE SHIP, ICE PLAIN (CONTINUOUS)

TEGAN RUNS OVER SNOW. DISTORTED GROWLING BLACK SNOWBEASTS, HIT BY ARROWS OFF.

TEGAN:

(CALLING, RUNNING) I'll be as quick as I can!

TEGAN RUNS UP METAL RAMP.

DISTORTED SNARLING OF SNOWBEASTS APPROACHING.

TEGAN HAMMERS ON METAL HATCH.

TEGAN:

Hey. Open up! (SOTTO) Maybe this was a stupid idea after all...
(BANGS AGAIN) Hey! Let me in!

HATCH SLIDES OPEN.

TEGAN:

Thanks. And who might you- (CRIES OUT AS SHE'S GRABBED)

TEGAN DRAGGED INSIDE. HATCH SLAMS SHUT.

JESPER:

(DISTANT) Lady Tegan!

SHIPS ENGINES START. BLACK SNOWBEASTS GO CRAZY, RUNNING TOWARDS IT.

JESPER:

(DISTANT, RUNNING) No, Lady Tegan!

BLACK SNOWBEASTS DISTORTED ROARS AND HOWLS CONTINUE.

SCENE 68: **EXT. ICE GARDEN**

PEOPLE WINCHING TARDIS FROM ICE. GUARDS STRAINING, PULLING ROPES.

DOCTOR:

That's it! She's clear of the ice... Now, lower... gently!

KARLINA:

(APPROACHING, CALLING) This is your ship? This... blue box.

NYSSA:

There's so much more to the TARDIS than how it looks. As your men on the ropes could tell.

TARDIS CRUNCHES ONTO GROUND.

DOCTOR:

That's it! She's safe. (WALKS OVER) Stay back, everyone. It'll still be dangerous until I've installed the stabiliser. (UNLOCKS TARDIS) Shan't be long! (ENTERS TARDIS)

KARLINA:

(JUST OFF) The Doctor has all he requires?

NYSSA:

(WALKING OVER TO HER) You should tell your people, we'll be ready to take them on board soon.

KARLINA:

I have been in council. I am come to inform you. They may leave, but I will not.

NYSSA:

But the Doctor can take you anywhere. In this universe or even... somewhere else. Somewhere safe.

KARLINA:

Isenfel is my home. I stay. After all I have done, I do not belong in my people's future.

NYSSA:

And Princess Inger? What does she think?

KARLINA:

Inger accepts the responsibility of her office. Her reign will be a new way of life. One I do not know.

TURLOUGH:

(CALLING) Nyssa! We've got trouble! You need to come back to the palace!

DISTORTED SNARLING, SNAPPING OF BLACK SNOWBEASTS APPROACHING OVER RIDGE.

NYSSA:

Oh no.

ALL RUN AS BLACK SNOWBEASTS SWARM INTO ICE GARDEN.

INGER:

(CALLING) The black snowbeasts! Everyone! Stay back!

NYSSA:

They've surrounded the TARDIS!

KARLINA:

What are they?

NYSSA:

Automatic matter dispersal. If the black snow's not efficient enough, I imagine this method's a little more direct.

TURLOUGH:

(RUNNING UP) We saw what they can do out on the ice plains. It isn't pretty. Where's the Doctor?

NYSSA:

Inside the TARDIS. We should warn him.

INGER:

(RUNNING UP) Even I cannot loose enough arrows to stop them.

KARLINA:

They are not attacking. They pace around your blue box.

BLACK SNOWBEASTS DISTORTED GROWLS.

NYSSA:

Oh no. What's got the strongest energy signature here?

TURLOUGH:

The TARDIS.

NYSSA:

You don't think they'll try and-.

BLACK SNOWBEASTS POUNCE AT TARDIS. DISTORTED THUDS AND HOWLS.

TURLOUGH:

No... They can't break through... Can they?

SNOWBEASTS HURL THEMSELVES AT DOORS. DISTORTED TARDIS SOUND.

NYSSA:

The shell's already weak... I think they're destroying it!

TURLOUGH:

But the Doctor's in there!

GROUND TREMORS START.

SCENE 69: **INT. TARDIS**

B/G HUM. TARDIS ROCKED BY BLACK SNOWBEAST ATTACKS

DOCTOR:

(GRIPPING CONSOLE) Come on, old girl. Your shell should be regenerating. What's stopping you? (ACTIVATES MONITOR)

MONITOR SHOWS GROWLING BLACK SNOWBEASTS ATTACKING TARDIS OUTSIDE. SPARKING AND ALARMS ON CONSOLE.

DOCTOR:

(USING CONTROLS) Oh no... And while the dimensions are phased...

CRACKLING OF BLACK SNOWBEASTS APPEARING IN CONSOLE ROOM, ROARING.

DOCTOR:

They can get inside...

DISTORTED ROARS CLOSER.

DOCTOR:

Get away! Get away from the console! (BEAT, BACKING AWAY) Oh, but you can't, can you... It's the biggest energy source this world has ever seen. So you have to destroy it!

BLACK SNOWBEASTS ROAR, LEAPING AT CONSOLE – SPARKS AND EXPLOSIONS

SCENE 70: **EXT. ICE PLAIN**

CRACKLING OF BARRIER CONTINUES. PIRATE SHIP ENGINES AS IT LIFTS OFF. JESPER RIDES TOWARDS IT AS BLACK SNOWBEASTS GROWL

JESPER:

(FIRING ARROWS) Lady Tegan! No!!

SKY CRACKS OPEN AGAIN AND SHIP JETS OFF THROUGH THE CRACK.

JESPER:

The ship is gone!

GROUND SHAKES.

JESPER:

Now the ground shakes... This cannot be that vessel's doing?

HUM OF BARRIER RISES IN PITCH. BLACK BEASTS START HOWLING.

JESPER:

No. Something else is happening. I do not understand!

SCENE 71: **EXT. ICE GARDEN**

GROUND TREMORS BUILDING. DISTORTED HOWLING OF BLACK SNOWBEASTS ATTACKING TARDIS.

NYSSA:

That howling, it's horrible!

TURLOUGH:

(CALLING, OFF) They're destroying the TARDIS! And when they're finished, they'll come for us. Come on Nyssa, back to the palace!

NYSSA:

But, the Doctor-

RUMBLING, CRACKING ICE

INGER:

(CALLING) Is this an earthquake?

NYSSA:

(CALLING) Inger! Turlough! Get away from the statues!

ICE STATUE SHAKES AND FALLS, SMASHING TO PIECES.

KARLINA:

The death throes of my kingdom...

NYSSA:

Surely it's too soon for total collapse?

CRACKLING OF EQUILIBRIUM GAUGE.

KARLINA:

(WALKING TOWARDS TARDIS) My kingdom... These monsters have no place in it.

INGER:

(CALLING) Go Turlough! Keep the people inside. (RUNS TO KARLINA)

TURLOUGH:

(OFF) All right, but hurry. And bring Nyssa. (RUNS TO PALACE)

INGER:

Mother! What are you doing?

CRACKLING OF EQUILIBRIUM GAUGE. BLACK SNOWBEASTS STOP ATTACKING TARDIS AND GROWL.

KARLINA:

See how the Gauge of Equilibrium glows. It has power. Power enough to control these beasts.

KARLINA WALKS AWAY, WAVING CRACKLING GAUGE THROUGH

INGER:

It's true... They follow you...

KARLINA:

Here, I say who lives and who dies. (SWIPES WITH GAUGE)

BLACK SNOWBEASTS HOWL AT HER.

NYSSA:

Of course. The Gauge is part of the control system... They're responding.

KARLINA:

(WALKING AWAY, CALLING) I am your queen and you will follow me! Rule well, daughter!

GROWLING BLACK SNOWBEASTS FOLLOW KARLINA UP RIDGE.

INGER:

She leads the beasts away. Back over the ridge. Your box is safe.

TARDIS DOORS OPEN.

DOCTOR:

(EXITING TARDIS) Thank you. It was getting a little heated in there.

NYSSA:

Doctor! Is the TARDIS damaged?

DOCTOR:

She needs a little time to recover. We both do.

GROUND TREMORS. DISTORTED HOWLING OF BLACK SNOWBEASTS IN DISTANCE.

NYSSA:

Queen Karlina...

DOCTOR:

(INTERRUPTING) ...is doing what she had to. We need to hurry, and collect everyone from the palace.

THEY SET OFF OVER QUAKING GROUND.

NYSSA:

Inger. I'm sorry.

INGER:

Do not be. Mother already passed the crown. She said the people already know a better way. We should live it.

GROUND TREMORS SUDDENLY HALT – A RINGING SILENCE.

NYSSA:

Wait!

INGER:

Is this it? This... silence? Is Isenfel ending?

NYSSA:

No... Skarsgard!

DOCTOR:

Nyssa?

NYSSA:

When he gave me the stabiliser. He was going to the Balancing chamber...

FAINT ENERGY PULSES BEGIN.

DOCTOR:

Oh... But that's... brilliant! Quite, quite brilliant!

INGER:

What is? (GASPS) Isenfel be constant, the sky!

NYSSA:

Your energy barrier's lighting up! It's expanding...

PULSING, TINKLING RHYTHMIC ENERGY PULSES BUILD.

DOCTOR:

Skarsgard's plugged himself back into the control system. He's discharging his power-core.

NYSSA:

Can he do that?

DOCTOR:

It was meant to keep him running for centuries. But he knows those systems better than anyone. Even if he didn't realise till now.

INGER:

Balancer Skarsgard has done this to our sky?

DOCTOR:

He's given Isenfel a new lease of life. His own.

SCENE 72: **INT. INNER BALANCING CHAMBER**

TINKLING SYSTEMS BUILDING ALL THROUGH.

SKARSGARD:

(STRAINED) Isenfel be constant... Isenfel be constant... Isenfel be constant... no more.

(CALLING IN TRIUMPH) Isenfel be free!

SKARSGARD AND THE CONTROL CHAMBER DISINTEGRATE AND REFORM IN SHIMMERING ICE.

SCENE 73: **EXT. ICE GARDEN**

TINKLING SUFFUSION OF LIGHT ENERGY SPREADING ACROSS EVERYTHING.

NYSSA:

Look under the ice. Pulses of power. Like ripples of energy.

DOCTOR:

Ripples flowing out from the palace. Centred on the Balancing Chamber... On the Balancer himself.

TURLOUGH:

(RUNNING UP) The people are asking what's happened.

INGER:

Isenfel's realm is restored. We live. Our people live.

NYSSA:

And the TARDIS?

DOCTOR:

Fully recovered.

TURLOUGH:

We can get back to N-Space?

DOCTOR:

We can. Now, your majesty, if you rally your men, we can right some of these statues before we go. It would be a terrible shame to leave them in this state. The unbroken ones anyway. I'll lend a hand.

NYSSA:

But Doctor. Shouldn't we- [get on our way?]

DOCTOR:

Nyssa. Could you make sure the Balancing Chamber is offline?
(BEAT) And Turlough, say your goodbyes. (RUSHING OFF, CALLING)
Throw me one of those ropes, would you?

INGER:

Your Doctor. His mood is as inconstant as... as...

TURLOUGH:

As the Doctor. Quite incomparable, isn't he?

SCENE 74: **EXT. ICE PLAIN**

GROWLING BLACK SNOWBEASTS FOLLOWING KARLINA.

KARLINA:

You will follow me to the end of the world, will you not?

GAUGE STOPS CRACKLING. SNOWBEASTS ROAR.

KARLINA:

The Gauge of Equilibrium is dead. (THROWS IT DOWN) Will you take me now, you monsters?

TINKLING LIGHT ENERGY REACHES BLACK SNOWBEASTS. THEY HOWL AND START TO DISSOLVE TO NOTHING.

KARLINA:

No. Even now my life is spared...

POSITIVE SUFFUSION OF LIGHT ENERGY CALMS EVERYTHING.

KARLINA:

A new light. A new world. Skarsgard has done his final service for Isenfel. Now I must do mine.

STARTS TRAMPING THROUGH SNOW.

KARLINA:

I was going to the Edge. I have no reason to change my course.

SCENE 75: **EXT. ICE PLAIN**

INGER SKINNING SNOWBEAST. TURLOUGH WALKS OVER.

TURLOUGH:

Sorry to interrupt your... whatever it is you're doing.

INGER:

I am skinning the beast. Then I shall joint it for the feast.

TURLOUGH:

Sorry I asked. Thank you... for a rather more exciting evening than I'd planned. And sorry. About Karlina.

INGER:

(KEEPS WORKING) You will not stay, Sir Turlough?

TURLOUGH:

Tempting as it is... No. You want to remain in your home. And I'm a long way from mine. It's not even in this universe.

INGER:

(STOPS, PUTS DOWN TOOLS) You are doing your 'running and hiding'?

TURLOUGH:

Yes... because, frankly, you terrify me.

INGER:

Come here, Sir Turlough.

INGER GRABS AND KISSES HIM.

TURLOUGH:

Well. Not all the time...

JESPER:

(CALLING, OFF) Highness! Princess Inger!

INGER:

My huntsman, Jesper. Where is his steed? Where are his men? —
(CALLING) Jesper! What has happened?

JESPER:

(RUNNING UP, BREATHLESS) Sir Turlough! The Lady Tegan, she came with me. We were looking for you.

TURLOUGH:

Me? Tegan went out there, looking for me?

JESPER:

Yes. Yes. I am sorry. The metal carriage took her.

TURLOUGH:

What? What are you talking about? What 'metal carriage'?

JESPER:

It went back to the stars... I could not save her.

INGER:

He is raving. (SLAPS HIM) Jesper. Recover yourself.

TURLOUGH:

Don't knock his head off!

JESPER:

My lady. I apologise. Thank you.

INGER:

Good. He has come to his senses.

TURLOUGH:

Start again, Jesper. Slowly. Tell me what's happened to Tegan!

SCENE 76: EXT. ICE PLAIN, OUTSIDE TARDIS

DOCTOR AND NYSSA WALK TO TARDIS.

DOCTOR:

I can't say for certain how long the power will last.

NYSSA:

The transduction dome's holding the atmosphere in place.

DOCTOR:

Providing artificial night and day. Nothing else. You checked the Balancing Chamber?

NYSSA:

The entire control centre under the palace has gone. Fused into solid ice. No sign of Skarsgard.

DOCTOR:

No. There wouldn't be.

THEY STOP.

NYSSA:

We could take them somewhere more hospitable. It doesn't have to be such a struggle.

DOCTOR:

(UNLOCKS TARDIS) They want to stay. Life can flourish here with no restrictions. They can do the things they never could before. Change, grow, expand.

NYSSA:

They may not have more than a few generations.

DOCTOR:

They don't need to know that. They've been living long enough under one death sentence. They don't need another. (BEAT) Now, where are the others?

NYSSA:

Turlough's with his princess. And Tegan...?

DOCTOR:

Yes. Tegan is... (BEAT) Where is Tegan?

NYSSA:

She went to the village. I haven't seen her since.

DOCTOR:

I'm sure she'll turn up. To be honest, I've been enjoying the peace and quiet.

NYSSA:

(WORRIED) No. She'd have been back by now. Everyone from the village came back. She... (AGHAST) Oh, where is she?

TURLOUGH:

(RUNNING UP) Doctor!

DOCTOR:

Turlough! (WORRIED) We seem to have mislaid Tegan. Have you seen her anywhere?

TURLOUGH:

No. But I know what's happened...

NYSSA:

What is it? Is she-

TURLOUGH:

(OVER HER) She's been taken! Somebody's kidnapped Tegan!

DOCTOR:

What?!

SCENE 77: **INT. PIRATE SHIP, BRIG**

FX INSIDE PIRATE SHIP AS PER *THE ENTROPY PLAGUE*.

SMALL CONFINED PRISON CELL, METAL FLOOR. SHIP'S ENGINES B/G

TEGAN BANGS ON METAL DOOR.

TEGAN:

(CALLING) Let me out! (BANGS AGAIN) Won't someone answer! Who are you people? Where are you taking me?

HAMMERS ON DOOR.

TEGAN:

Please!

STEPS AWAY AND SINKS TO FLOOR

TEGAN:

(TO SELF) Oh, Doctor... Where are you? (BEAT) What have I got myself into...?

MOVE OUTSIDE SHIP AS ENGINES REV AND PIRATE SHIP JETS AWAY.

THE END